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CONTENTS

COMMENTS . . . . Page 537
THE CASE OF MR. PANTER 540
"A HAPPY ANNIVERSARY" 541
A LONDON DIARY 542
THE RING. By Y. Y. 543
TOOTH AND CLAW. By J. H. Driberg 544
SPICE. By MacFlecknoe 545
CORRESPONDENCE 545
From Ruth Bowley; Leaguer; Dame Ethel Smyth; Geoffrey E. Howard; F. M. Hardie; Rev. Basil Martin; Air-Commodore Chamier; Frances M. Collins; A Social Outlaw; Capt. Philip S. Mumford; H. P. Blunt.
STANLEY BALDWIN. 549
PERHAPS. By Stephen Spender 549
ALSACE, 1920. By Arthur E. E. Reade 549
PLAYS AND PICTURES . . . . . . Page 551
BOOKS IN GENERAL. By David Garnett 552
REVIEWS:
New Novels. By Peter Quennell 554
Things that go Bump in the Night. By Sylvia Townsend-Warner 555
Makers of the New World. By Harold J. Laski . 556
Paris and London 556
Apes and Men 558
Starvation Dundas. By Donald Carswell . . 558
A Good Text-book 560
Tools and the Man 560
SHORTER NOTICES 562
ABOUT MOTORING 562
PLAYTIME. By Caliban 564
THE WEEK IN THE CITY 566

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THE results of the borough elections show an even bigger change than we had expected. Labour reckons its gains in hundreds, and its losses are a mere handful. The Conservatives have gone down heavily, and the dwindling band of Liberals who have not made common cause with Toryism has dwindled still further. The Labour Party regains control at Sheffield, and secures majorities in a number of other industrial towns in the North, as well as in Norwich, Swansea, and the new borough of Willesden in the suburbs of London. These sweeping victories reflect the widespread and profound disgust with the administration of the Means Test, the housing shortage and the starving of the social services. We were told by a Tory paper the other day that the Socialists regard the municipal elections as "a grand enterprise of political jobbery and a priceless chance for redistributing other people's money." The first charge—of corruption—is, as its authors know, pure fudge. The second is true. All public expenditure, by Tories as well as Socialists, is a redistribution of "other people's money." The only difference is that the Socialists want it redistributed more thoroughly and more equitably.

Palestine

There are signs, as we write, that the trouble in Palestine (which has unhappily resulted in a casualty list of something like two hundred) is quieting down. The outbreak was not spontaneous; it was, like others in the past, inspired and planned by the Arab "effendis," the bourgeois nationalists, and it was directed rather at the Mandatory Power itself than at the Jews. The increase of Jewish immigrants was a pretext. In fact this increase, though substantial, is not due to the Government having opened the gates to a flood of refugees from Germany. The demand for that was not acceded to. Palestine is in a state of remarkable prosperity; with the growth of the orange trade, the completion of electricity schemes and of Haifa harbour, the exploitation of the Dead Sea, and the rise of new industries, the country can absorb more labour and capital and brains, and it needs them. Economically the position of the Arab workers has improved, and there would be little difficulty about establishing amicable and close relations between them and their Jewish fellow-workers if the nationalist fanatics ceased to foment suspicions and jealousies. Nationalism, of course, is not an easy thing to uproot, in Palestine or anywhere else, and Jews as well as Arabs have been assiduous in watering and tending it. We still believe in the possibility of making a united Palestinian nation under the British mandate. But the success of the experiment depends on the Jews and Arabs themselves.

Mr. Norman Davis Goes Home

The prospects of the Disarmament Conference have not brightened. Mr. Henderson finds that there are "material obstacles" to any meeting of the Bureau before

November 9th. The chief of these are the unreadiness of the new French Government and—what is more ominous—Signor Mussolini's objection to going on with the business in Germany's absence. Meanwhile, Mr. Norman Davis is returning to America. Why has he gone? Does it mean, as some think, that the United States is seriously troubled about the situation in the Far East, and is preparing to drop out of European affairs? This is officially denied from Washington; Mr. Davis, we are told, will return presently when he is wanted. We hope he will, for it is pretty clear that the League, or what is left of it, badly needs American support. That support could have been secured, and in full measure, at an earlier stage of the Conference. Since the chance was thrown away, largely through the behaviour of the British Government, things have worsened, both for the Americans and for the rest of us, and we do not expect the United States to be a *deus ex machina*, or even a fervid apostle of disarmament. But if there is to be any agreement to disarm, or any action to prevent Germany from rearming, America must be in it.

The New Turkey

Turkey has been *en fête* this week, celebrating the tenth anniversary of its Republic. Nobody will deny the magnitude of what has been achieved in these ten years under the guidance of Mustapha Kemal Pasha. The Ghazi is a dictator, but he has shown himself the most successful of the bunch—at any rate since Lenin. He began as a soldier, and it was his military genius and his courage before all that saved Turkey from perdition. After his victory he showed no disposition to play the Napoleon to his neighbours, but set himself to the task of domestic reform—or, if that is too mild a word, revolution. His policies have not always been above criticism, his methods have been autocratic, and he has inevitably made enemies among the more conservative elements in the nation. But the social and economic changes he has introduced have given a new life to a backward and stagnant country. The modernisation of Turkey is not a mere joke—the substitution of the bowler hat for the fez. The dead hand of the Caliphate is gone. Women are emancipated from their age-long servitude. The Latin alphabet in place of the Arabic opens the door to the advance of education. And, above all, the Anatolian peasant is no longer a beast of burden and cannon fodder, the helpless victim of tax collector and usurer. It is perhaps a slight exaggeration to call him, in the Ghazi's words, "the master of the country"; but both his status and his material conditions have been enormously improved, and his welfare is the first concern of the Government.

The Reichstag Fire Trial

Now that it is admitted that Torgler, Dimitrov, and Popov and Tanev can have had no actual hand in the firing of the Reichstag, everything depends on the effort of the prosecution to prove that the accused were seen conspiring together before the fire. Five stalwart Nazis have come forward to give evidence that Torgler and the Bulgarians knew each other and were in collusion. The nature of their evidence is sufficiently illustrated by one example. One of the witnesses, Dr. Dröscher, asserts that he recognises Dimitrov from a picture of a bearded man who was concerned with the burning of Sofia Cathedral. As Dimitrov, who is now clean-shaven, was not in Bulgaria at the time, and was never accused of taking part in the firing of the cathedral, it is not surprising that this witness is only "fairly certain" of his identity with the man in the picture, and very surprising that he should be quite certain that he recognised Dimitrov with Torgler in the Reichstag. Meanwhile another witness was so obviously a liar that he has been arrested for perjury, while Dimitrov, who continues, when he is given the chance, to defend himself with great courage and ability, has been again excluded from the Court. Nor does there seem any doubt that the remarks that led to his removal were justified; he suggested that the judge was influenced in his treatment of the prisoners by the rebuke administered to the court in the official Nazi papers which complained that the judge allowed the prisoners to make "filthy outbursts." It is clear that whatever the verdict is, it will be a purely political verdict; the trial itself has become daily more and more scandalous.

* * *

New evidence about the conduct of this trial has recently reached England. M. Detchev, one of the four foreign lawyers, who was expelled from the court on account of a joint protest to the judge, is now in this country. He is a Bulgarian advocate, without political affiliations, who was asked by the relatives of the accused men to act on their behalf. He and his Bulgarian colleague were allowed for a time to attend the court to make suggestions on behalf of the Bulgarian prisoners to Teichert, the counsel appointed by the court for their defence. They found the defence a farce. Teichert refused to take any evidence from Bulgaria on behalf of his clients, refused to ask for a medical examination of Van der Lubbe, though their whole case depended on the deposition which he was supposed to have made, and refused to lodge any protest against numerous irregularities, including the knocking about of Dimitrov as he was leaving the court room. M. Detchev adds a number of interesting points, the most important being that Frau Van Kroone, the Dutch interpreter appointed in the first instance by the court to translate for Van der Lubbe, resigned her post on the ground that the deposition brought into the court had been falsified after it was taken down. She was replaced not by any of the other four Dutch translators officially authorised to act for the court, but by a Nazi translator imported for the purpose.

Another Bolshie Mare's-Nest

The negotiations for a new Anglo-Russian trade agreement have been dragging on for so long that they have almost dropped out of the news. But they were recalled sharply by the revelation in certain newspapers on Tuesday of an alleged scandal. A confidential memorandum from the Canadian Government, it was said, has been sent by the British Government to Moscow. So it has, but with the approval of the Canadian Government, Whitehall replies. And there seems to be ample reason for sending it, since we understand that it sets out in detail, what had only been put in a general way before, the argument for restricting Russian timber imports into Great Britain in the interest of the Canadians. For our own part we do not see the advantage to this country of such a restriction, nor, we believe, do British timber-merchants favour it. But since it is a subject of contention it is evidently proper that the Russians should know the Canadian case. This matter, and other questions at issue (one of which is the length of notice to be given by the British Government if it should desire to limit or prohibit any particular import from the U.S.S.R.), ought to be settled with as little delay as possible. Anglo-Russian trade is going on, and only a few fanatics want it stopped; but it will go on better when it is regulated by a new agreement. It would do us no harm if that agreement were made before Mr. Litvinov and President Roosevelt make theirs.

British and Danish Pigs

The increase in British pig production under the new marketing scheme is leading to serious complications with Denmark, who depends absolutely on the British market, and has no chance of selling her bacon elsewhere. Mr. Walter Elliot asked the Danes to accept a further voluntary reduction of 16 per cent. in their bacon exports, which have been cut by about 40 per cent. already. The Danish Government has refused to agree, leaving the British Government to impose the further restriction without agreement. Unless it is imposed the curers will be left with a larger supply of unsaleable meat, which they have promised to buy, on their hands; and the Government, being responsible for the scheme, will have to shoulder their losses. A further complication is that the consumer prefers Danish bacon to much of the present English supply, which is apt to be fatter and less standardised in quality. This last difficulty may disappear gradually with the general adoption of standard breeds by the British farmers; in the meantime it is a fruitful source of discontent. Only the farmers are happy, with an assured market for their unexpectedly large output. The Danes are very unhappy indeed, and disposed to resent the British attitude, in face of the considerable steps they have taken to increase their purchases of our goods in order to strengthen their claim to a share in the British market. Quite possibly the severe depression of exports will have serious political consequences in Denmark, by making the Government the scapegoat for its failure to exact better terms from Great Britain.

A National Transport System

The railway companies are taking over the ordinary capital of both Carter Paterson and Pickford. Having entered into agreements and arrangements for purchase and joint operation with the bus services all over the country, they are now making a similar attack on the problem of goods transport by road. In this case no general linking up of services is possible by the purchase, wholly or in part, of a small number of undertakings; the road transport contractors, large and small, are far too numerous, and new services can be too easily set up, for anything like complete control to be possible under the existing law. But the railway companies now realise that if they are to hold their own in face of road competition they must provide efficient and speedy house to house services; and they think the best way of doing this is to acquire key undertakings already in existence rather than to establish new competing services. Obviously co-ordination is badly needed, and ought to go much further than it can go along the present lines. Nor are these lines necessarily sound, for they involve at present the taking over and working of more and more undertakings in the interests of the railways. Undoubtedly, it is of vital public importance to save the railways from collapse. But this could be far better done by one national authority impartial between road and rail, and entrusted with the task of developing a co-ordinated service of transport in the interest of industry and of the travelling public.

Cigarette Coupons

There are to be no more cigarette coupons, miniature playing cards, or gift vouchers after the end of this year. So the trade decrees; and so it will be done, unless any independent manufacturers decide to break away. In future, when we buy cigarettes, we are to buy just cigarettes and nothing else. With one proviso there is much to be said for this; for when once this coupon business gets started no one seems to be able to stop it from going to ridiculous lengths—till a wholesale trade in coupons grows up, and firms are created for no other purpose than to buy them up. The proviso is, however, important. It is that, if we are to get only cigarettes for our money, we shall pay less for them than we are now paying for the cigarettes *plus* the gifts. Will the closely combined tobacco trade bring down prices as well as costs? In one field, it evidently means to stop us from getting its wares cheap; for it has declared intensive war, by means of the boycott, on the "cut price" traders who at present exist in large numbers. Well and good. We do not object, provided that the price fixed by the makers is reasonable, and that they do not use their combination so as to exact a monopoly profit.

Motorists and Insurance

While everyone discusses what steps should be taken to lessen the appalling loss of life on the roads, it is worth while also to consider whether the compulsory insurance provisions in the Road Traffic Act have proved as satisfactory as we had hoped in guaranteeing compensation to road accident victims or their dependants. Recent cases in the courts have shown that the underwriters are not legally liable to pay compensation in cases where a condition laid down in the policy has not been fulfilled by the owner of the car. If, for instance, at the time of the accident the car, insured for private purposes, is being used for trade purposes, the fact that the motorist carries an insurance certificate does not help the victim. In one case, described by Mr. Justice Maugham as a very unfortunate one, it was stated that the company escaped liability because the policy did not apply if the motorist failed to keep the car in a roadworthy condition, which was amply proved. The car in question came out of a side road, apparently out of control, at a speed of between 50 and 60 miles an hour, mounted the pavement and killed a man. As against the motorist, the widow was awarded £1,200, of which £600 was to be allocated to the children, of whom there were seven. The compensation does not seem excessive. The husband, aged forty-four, earned £200 a year, and would have been entitled, at the age of sixty, to a grant of £259 and a pension of about £100 a year. However, the widow may perhaps consider herself lucky; for had the motorist died at any time during the sixteen months between the date of the accident and the hearing, the action would have died with him and she would have had no redress at all.

THE CASE OF MR. PANTER

MR. PANTER is to be set free from his prison in Munich and only punished for his "crime" by expulsion from Germany. But his release does not wipe out, indeed it emphasises, the significance of his arrest. At first sight that arrest seemed a particularly crude example of that genius for doing the inept thing which has characterised Germany's conduct of international affairs ever since the fall of Bismarck. One can imagine Dr. Goebbels, as Minister of Propaganda, bitterly complaining that the Nazi police have at a single stroke undone all the ingenious propagandist work on which he has spent many thousands of pounds in this country alone during the last few months. What is the use, he may well ask, of distributing leaflets, of arranging for denials of atrocities and reassurances about military preparations, of sending round Nazi missionaries to speak at societies and to write articles to newspapers —what is the use of all this if the police are going to arrest the apparently respectable correspondent of a very respectable Conservative British paper, put him into solitary confinement, only allowing him the elementary right of seeing the British Consul as a result of pressure from the Embassy, and even, most exasperating of all, threatening him with a charge of "espionage," a crime of which, as everyone knows since a recent affair in Moscow, no British citizen can ever be guilty? Is it not hard for a Minister of Propaganda to see the whole British press, even including the increasingly Fascist organs of Lord Beaverbrook and Lord Rothermere, forced into line, if only for the moment, with the *Manchester Guardian* and *News-Chronicle*.

That is the first impression. But there is another aspect of Mr. Panter's arrest which is more easily forgotten. The truth is notoriously aggravating and Mr Panter may have been arrested in a fit of temper because he told the truth. But it is at least possible that those who control affairs in Nazi Germany are deliberately prepared to weather the temporary inconveniences of an outburst of anger in foreign countries for the sake of advantages which they may hope to gain by showing themselves strong enough to insult the foreign press. To see how this may be so, we must realise the double and contradictory objective which Dr. Goebbels has always to keep in mind.

If Hitler is to succeed, he must, for internal reasons, both exacerbate the Nationalist and militarist spirit of the Nazis and at the same time keep foreign countries as far as possible in ignorance about what is taking place in Germany. He must be careful at all costs to prevent the publication of information which may provide the League Powers with a justification for coercive action. It is not in the nature of Nazidom to forego the pomp of military display; and it is logically imperative for Hitler constantly to remind the German people that he is preparing for a new war which will wipe out the humiliations of the last, that, in the words of *Mein Kampf*, "the aim of a German foreign policy must be the preparation for wresting back freedom to-morrow." If the S.A. are to be kept loyal and the people, who have been promised so much and given so little that is solid, kept quiet, they must at least have the solace and reassurance that their country is being armed and made strong. But it is equally essential that military celebrations should be kept out of the foreign press, just as it was important that Hitler's declaration in *Mein Kampf* that he intends war should be omitted from the potted English edition recently published as *My Struggle* in England.

If we remember this double necessity for Nazi propaganda, Mr. Panter's arrest becomes more intelligible and more sinister. If under German law it is now "treason" to tell the truth about a military display, to report, as Mr. Panter reported, a demonstration of 20,000 goose-steppers, the firing of salutes and the inspection of troops, if it may be called "espionage" to say that an order has been sent to the German press not to mention these things, and only to publish "harmless looking photographs," will not this have its effect on other foreign correspondents in Germany? Is it not perhaps Dr. Goebbel's calculation that the corps of foreign journalists will be prudent, will be frightened of expulsion or arrest and will, in fact, to a much greater extent than they have so far done, bow to the same drastic limitations as the spoon-fed German press? In this way, it may be argued that the arrest of Mr. Panter may be worth while from the Nazi point of view. The anger of the moment will be forgotten and, if things work to plan, the bolder and more independent journalists will be muzzled or turned out and their places taken by men who are content with the appearance of independence.

It is not generally recognised how much the world owes to the group of foreign correspondents in Germany. Ever since the triumph of Hitler they have done their job under immense difficulties. In a number of cases where their messages or the editorial comments in their papers have been too outspoken, papers and correspondents have alike been banned. In others, pressure of many descriptions has been brought to prevent unfavourable messages leaving the country, the rooms of the correspondents have been searched, their own safety and that of their wives and families have been menaced, and thay have lived under the constant and acute embarrassment of knowing that if they refuse to accept the official version of events and seek independent information, they must keep its source an absolute secret lest they imperil the lives and the liberty of their informants. In such circumstances, every self-respecting journalist in Germany to-day must be guilty of treason and espionage. It has been a fortunate thing for the world that correspondents of tough grain were in Berlin when Hitler came to power, that Edgar Mowrer, who had already incurred odium with the Nazis by his book *Germany Puts the Clock Back*, should have been supported by the association of foreign journalists of which he was president, and that on his departure a man of outstanding ability and courage like Mr. Ebbutt of the *Times* should have been there to take his place. If we read matters aright to-day, the arrest of Mr. Panter is designed as a warning to the better-known correspondents in Berlin, and they will need, and we hope they will receive, all the encouragement and support that their newspapers and the British public at home can give them in their unenviable task.

Some such calculations may be going through the mind of Dr. Goebbels. But given newspapers in foreign countries that want the truth and stand by their correspondents, we believe that such tactics are unlikely to succeed. The experience of Russia suggests not that censorship results in the acceptance abroad of the official version of the facts; but that it is dismissed out of hand while rival versions of the truth riot and prosper to the confusion of everyone and the bedevilment of good relations. To-day, if Hitler wishes us to believe in his good faith, to accept his word that his military displays really mean nothing very much, then his present methods are not well directed. It is no good saying that journalists are invited to see anything they wish, if they are to be treated as criminals for reporting what they see and hear. If Germany has not, in fact, the very large stock of secret arms which the Quai D'Orsay believes that she possesses, then Hitler would be well advised to allow foreigners to investigate her arsenals. If the fact that Germany is now importing twice as much nickel and tungsten as she was in 1932 does not mean that she is very rapidly re-arming, then Hitler must find a better way of reassuring the outside world than by muzzling journalists. The fact is that Germany is too large, too important and too intimately bound up with the life of the rest of Europe for the experiment in psychological autarchy to work. Economic autarchy is a crazy enough experiment; but to attempt to live on her own fat is a less dangerous and less impracticable task than to enforce on the whole German people a militarist idea and at the same time to hide this from the foreigner against whom the war is sometime to be launched. If Dr. Banse continues to out-Bernhardi Bernhardi, if schoolchildren are taught to throw hand-grenades, and university students taken from their studies to compulsory training camps, if the young, as Hitler put it, are to be taught history in such a way that they learn, above everything, to venerate the German army and to see in its achievements the personification of German greatness, the rest of the world will not be reassured by the absence of reports from faithful newspaper correspondents. On the contrary, if responsible reporting is called espionage, then we shall find ourselves relying on the reports of secret spies of governments and armament makers; we shall live in suspense, waiting and arming in preparation for a catastrophe which we shall no longer have the means of averting.

"A HAPPY ANNIVERSARY"

being an Editorial from our Leading National Daily, Jan. 1, 1939

THE first anniversary of the accession to power of Lord Hustler's first British Fascist Government is an inevitable, and in this case welcome, opportunity for stock-taking. It is notorious that in politics the Englishman has taught the rest of the world more than he has learnt from it, and by instinct and tradition we prefer the British method of compromise to the Continental method of revolution. But the sudden declaration of war upon France on Christmas Eve a short twelve months ago, and the complete destruction of Paris, Lyons and Marseilles in the early morning of Christmas Day, followed so rapidly by the partition of France between Herr Hitler and Signor Mussolini, convinced every one except a handful of alien fanatics and native idealists that the British Constitution must adapt itself to the new forms which civilisation is taking upon the Continent. Even foreign observers have noted with admiration how the elasticity of our Constitution has allowed us to pass without revolution from a democratic to a Fascist form of government. The emergency measures rapidly passed by both Houses of Parliament invested Lord (then Sir Benito) Hustler with dictatorial powers in order to suppress the general strike which broke out at the first rumour of the formation of a Fascist Cabinet. The unhappy and misguided men who proclaimed the general strike have paid the just penalty of their criminal folly. Mr. Bevin, Mr. Henderson, Mr. Lansbury, Mr. Citrine, Sir Stafford Cripps, and about a dozen more so-called Trade Union and Labour leaders are dead; they were dealt with promptly and sternly by Lord Hustler's irregulars, members of the Officers' Cadet Corps, or in a few cases officers of the Regular Army. We have no sympathy for the "Socialist" intellectuals, like Mr. Wise, who shared their fate, and Mr. Bertrand Russell, who was shot while attempting to escape, carried into the manner of his death the wrongheadedness and perversity which he had shown throughout his life. There were a few, a very few, cases in which perhaps it would have been wiser to temper justice with mercy—for instance, the beating to death of Mr. and Mrs. Bernard Shaw, and Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Webb, by some over-enthusiastic young Fascists has caused some adverse comment in America; but we would remind our American friends that, in a homely phrase, you cannot make an omelette, even an English omelette, without breaking eggs. It is estimated that the total number of Communists, Socialists, Jews, and intellectuals who were killed or committed suicide in Great Britain during January of last year did not exceed 10,000, a figure which is eloquent of the humanity and good temper of our race. The complete destruction of Dublin by our Air Force, and the reconquest of Southern Ireland by Lord Lloyd, entailed, of course, a much greater loss of life in that country; but it is the results which one must look at in this case, and they are eminently satisfactory, since in his last despatch Lord Lloyd is able to assure Lord Hustler that the whole population left in Southern as well as in Northern Ireland is now loyal. If Mr. Churchill's drastic measures can secure in India what Lord Lloyd has accomplished in Ireland, these two great administrators will have deserved well of their country.

The adaptability of the British and their institutions is shown by the rapidity with which all classes have settled down under the new regime. The process of adjustment has been helped by the banishment to concentration camps on the Andaman Islands of the surviving Trade Unionist, Socialist, and Communist leaders, together with a considerable number of intellectuals, particularly writers and university teachers. The Jewish question was far easier to settle in this country than in Germany, since the number of Jews in prominent positions was comparatively small. A few will regret the elimination from public life of men like Lord Reading and Sir Philip Sassoon or the disappearance of Mr. James de Rothschild's colours from our racecourses, but the removal of all British Jews to Somaliland (of which Lord Reading is now Viceroy and Governor-General) has proved an admirable solution of the problem. We may also note with some justifiable pride an instance here of that insistent spirit of compromise in our race; we refer to Lord Hustler's Order-in-Council laying it down that the possession of only one Jewish grandmother shall not entail loss of British citizenship—a wise decision which has enabled some representatives of our oldest and most aristocratic families to retain their seats in the House of Lords, and, in one notable instance, to remain—with the approval of all racing men—a steward of the Jockey Club.

The relations of the press to the new Government are everything that can be desired. We are divulging no secrets when we say that there was a moment of acute crisis in the middle of last year. No one will deny the services of Lord Beaverbrook and his newspapers in helping to establish Lord Hustler's government, but the time came when it was obvious that Lord Beaverbrook would not be content with anything but the highest position in the land. There was a short and sharp struggle conducted behind the scenes. It was ended by the deportation of Lord Beaverbrook to Canada, the absorption of the Beaverbrook papers by the Northcliffe group, and the appointment of Lord Rothermere as Minister of Propaganda.

Finally a word about the Government itself. The British Constitution remains intact. When His Majesty the King sent for Sir Benito Hustler and invited him to form a Government (subsequently raising him to the peerage) he was acting, as he has always done, according to the letter and spirit of the Constitution. The loyalty of every British man and woman is as strong to-day—and rightly so—as it has ever been to the Throne and the Royal Family. It was the House of Commons and House of Lords which voluntarily divested themselves of some of their historic powers and placed them in the hands of Lord Hustler. The spirit of mercy and justice with which he has used those powers towards his old opponents is shown by the presence in the present House of Lords of such men as Lord Ramsay-MacDonald, Lord Baldwin, and Lord Thomas. Meanwhile, in twelve months the Government has done more to solve the unemployment question than the previous governments effected in twelve years. The immense activity in our naval dockyards and armament factories has absorbed hundreds of thousands of our unemployed; another 500,000 men have been given employment in our army, navy, and auxiliary forces. It is thought that the depopulation of Southern Ireland will afford an opportunity for settling large numbers of persons from this country on the land (now ownerless) in the depopulated districts. It is even suggested in some quarters that emigration to the depopulated areas in India might be encouraged as soon as Mr. Churchill's administration has proved as effective as Lord Lloyd's. In any event, we make bold to prophesy that this day twelve months, even if there has been no European war on a large scale in the interval, unemployment will have been reduced to normal figures, or even below them, in this country.

A LONDON DIARY

Mr. Gerald Gould's article on the Pacifist's Dilemma led to a very interesting discussion at which I was present. After general debate each person was asked to state his own attitude in the event of another war. One of them, a young man, declared that little as he liked the notion of fighting, he would not hesitate to join up against the Nazis if they went beyond a certain point in violating frontiers and making an international nuisance of themselves. Two others joined issue at once; as men who had fought in the last war they were all for neutrality up to the point of actual invasion of England. Only in this last resort would they ever fight again. A fourth was an out-and-out pacifist and non-resister, but he admitted that he was not so sure that his objection would stand all tests now as he had been in 1914. The fifth was an Italian of independent mind; he knew what it was like to live under Fascism and said he would fight in any war, civil or international, which held out the least chance of overthrowing Fascismo. The sixth, a German, also wanted to do down Fascism, but did not think war a good way and would not fight against his own country. The seventh and eighth held that if the League of Nations were a real League of Nations they would be as much bound to support an international war under its auspices as they would be to uphold the national police force, but they would not be taken in by an alliance of a few Powers making use of the prestige of the League for the pursuit of their own interests, and they would resist any other kind of war except a League war. The last man said he would not fight in any war between nations in any circumstances; a war against a Fascist Government, if successful, could only turn into an international war against the proletarian revolution that would rise on its ruins, and his business would be at home trying to overthrow the military Government here. It is remarkable how Hitler has divided the pacifist as well as the militarist camp.

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The publication of the *Trial of Wm. Herbert Wallace* (Gollancz, 10*s.* 6*d*) brings back to my mind an evening in May, 1931, when a stranger from Liverpool asked to see me on urgent business. He was perturbed by the verdict of guilty given against an insurance agent who had been convicted of murdering his wife. He brought me accounts of the case from the Liverpool press; he had himself carefully followed the trial, and he convinced me that the verdict was due not to the evidence, which had completely failed to convince the judge, but to the fact that the jury was shocked by the brutality of the murder, and had it already in their heads before the trial had begun that Wallace was guilty. As a result of our conversation an article entitled "An Alarming Verdict" appeared in this paper on May 2nd, and a leading article the following week urged that if a trial of a sensational character was held in the place where the crime had been committed no publicity ought to be given to the preliminary inquiry in the magistrates' court. The police, anxious to get a prisoner committed for trial, tend at that stage to emphasise everything that can be made to look black against the prisoner, whether it is admissible as evidence or not in the trial, and the press reports the hearing in such a way that the public is brought up to a great pitch of excitement against the accused man. It was also suggested that the Court of Criminal Appeal should abandon in the Wallace case its usual objection to overriding a verdict except on purely legal grounds. This was exactly what happened; the Court of Criminal Appeal took the unprecedented and obviously right course of quashing the verdict on the ground that it "could not be supported, having regard to the evidence." The case to-day makes fascinating reading. In addition to being a first-rate detective story, it has the incidental advantage of giving one a real insight into the process of law, the way in which the police can build up a case on somewhat flimsy circumstantial evidence, and the battle of wits between two eminent K.C.s.

* * *

I have just spent a week-end in a remote and unspoiled village nestling in a hollow of the downlands of South Wilts and North Dorset. But my stay was tempered with regret and cynical amusement, for, incredible as it may appear, in that famous pastoral country we had to subsist on tinned milk! The reasons are these: now that the new Milk Marketing Scheme is in preparation under the aegis of a special transitional scheme until December 31st, no registered milk-farmer dare sell more than one gallon of milk a day privately, i.e., as an ordinary milkman. He must sell it to the regional depot, in bulk. Around my host's village all the farms are, as is the rule in that country, large pastoral units. The village is small, and the farmlands surround it. No one keeps a solitary cow. The village is four miles from the nearest regular milkman's round, and it has hitherto taken a good milk supply from all the surrounding farmers. Now it cannot get fresh milk. Only the favoured few share in the farmers' "two-gallon dispensation." As a result, the one-room village-grocer is doing a roaring trade in tinned milk of the liquid variety, while in the bar parlour o' nights there is talk of a "club" to buy a communal cow. Even then there is fear that the village will need two or three in case the one goes dry; and that will make it an "undertaking," with further fear of being compelled to sell once more to the distant depot. This kind of a joke by Mr. Walter Elliot's myrmidons is a trifle thin in the heart of such country—in fact, like skim milk; but the cream of it is that the tinned milk for Britain's rural homes is imported . . . from Switzerland! My host's milkman is, in fact, now a well-known London store!

* * *

I scarcely expected that anyone would make an accurate guess at the writer of the letter signed by "Dr. Crankley" which I reproduced last week. Correspondents have suggested Dickens, Thackeray, Browning, Gladstone, Matthew Arnold, John Stuart Mill and Tennyson, and some of them have provided ingenious reasons in support of their guesses. Dickens was a favourite, references in the letter to spittoons suggesting his American experiences. Actually the letter was written by Karl Marx to his daughter, and the original was recently found in the archives of the Social Democratic Party in Berlin.

* * *

I walked into a shop at about 5.30 the other evening in a small country town which has a population of about 10,000. It was one of those shops which have only come into existence during the last six or seven years, selling wireless sets, gramophone records, and all the odds and ends of the electrical industry. I wanted an electric light " bulb " and I had to wait while three people handed in wireless set batteries to be charged. When my turn came I said to the assistant: " I suppose you do a good deal of that." He became positively lyrical on the subject of charging batteries. " You wouldn't believe it, sir," he said, " it's simply marvellous. How many batteries do you think we charge every week in this shop? Never less than 300, and often as many as 500! We keep a man who does nothing else but deal with the batteries, fetching them from here, taking them into the room through that door there, entering the name in a book, and bringing them back into the shop when the customer calls for them. It's a bad Saturday when we make less than £3 on the batteries." There are four or five other wireless shops in that town. I presume therefore that at least 2,000 batteries are charged every week there and four or five young men earn a living by carrying batteries all day long backwards and forwards. It throws a curious light on the changes, economic and social, that go with mass production.

* * *

A correspondent sends me a remarkable specimen of municipal election literature. Beneath the portraits of two unexceptionable gentlemen I read :—

> They are NON-Political. They are not Independent, and if elected will work entirely in Ratepayers' interest. You have two votes —vote solid for both.

* * *

Another example of advertising. This time it is the *Morning Post* that speaks.

> A lot of pre-war things we certainly don't want ever to return. But at least we'll agree on this . . . . The Edwardian and pre-Edwardian knew how to choose wines, food, cigars. They made no bones about the sin of tipping one's club waiter or of trying to buy service in a restaurant at the expense of fellow diners. Good manners were something which gave them pride. They did not sit on the fence when it came to a question of who was highest in the land. The *Morning Post*, I believe, represents the 1933 interpretation of these qualities. —Advt. in *Morning Post.*

* * *

> Herr Murr, the Statthalter of Württemberg, in a speech at Stuttgart, said that the Nazis wanted foreign countries with Parliamentary institutions to see that when vital national issues were at stake Herr Hitler employed the referendum, " the most democratic of all electoral methods." He added that all those who did not go to the poll and vote for the Government on November 12th were " traitors."
>
> At Zweibrücken, in the Palatinate, four persons have been arrested for having expressed misgivings about the possible consequences of the Government's policy at Geneva.—Report from Munich correspondent of the *Times.*

* * *

> Major Napier, who explained that he was not a " literary gent," but that as one who played games, he believed books provided the relaxation and stimulus physical exercise deserved, appealed to teachers to encourage their pupils to make use of the library.—Report in *Liverpool Post.*

CRITIC

THE RING

THERE is something peculiarly attractive in the setting of a boxing contest in the Albert Hall. The little square ring in the midst of the vast circle of the hall has the remoteness from reality of a scene in the theatre, as two strong men in bathing-drawers pursue one another with intent to hurt under the glare of the top-lights. The audience that crowds floor and box and balcony is seen through a mist of tobacco-smoke, a company of shadows. It is an immensely critical audience, easily moved to laughter or applause or protest. It shouts remarks. It does not mind booing the decision of the referee. It is, I suppose, fighting in its own imagination as each blow is struck and it is with a leap of the fighter's heart that it sees a glove well and powerfully planted between the eyes, or ribs pounded till you would think they would break. I have none of these emotions myself. I feel half-sorry as well as half-pleased when I see a man receiving a stinging blow on the nose. Yet the true lover of boxing—whom I greatly envy—is aware of nothing but delight. He loves what he calls a " vicious punch " as the true Rugby enthusiast loves what he calls " remorseless tackling." It is a strange fact that things that are regarded as evils in ordinary life—" viciousness " and " remorselessness," for example—should be lauded as virtues in sport. The explanation may be, that the words do not mean the same thing in ordinary life as in sport. What a boxing enthusiast means by a " vicious punch " is really a " virtuous punch," and all hearts, save half of mine, go out to it.

When I arrived in the top balcony of the Albert Hall on Monday night, two large and perspiring men were feeling about hopefully for each other's eyes, jaws, and bodies far down below me. The taller of the two, Ben Foord of South Africa, was feeling about the more energetically of the two. He danced up and down and round and round his German opponent, Hans Schonrath, who moved deliberately as a bear, defending himself from the shower of blows that were aimed at him. Then, as if without an effort, Hans would walk slowly forward into the shower and, heedless of the blows that struck him, force Foord back against the ropes, flashing a blow on the face that seemed to be as damaging as three of Foord's blows. Cook has said of Schonrath: " Hitting this guy is like punching a brick wall," and the folds of muscle that covered his body made one feel that it was a hopeless task for a man of slighter build to keep on pounding at him. Foord, however, clearly refused to believe this. Again and again, as he swayed for an instant against the ropes under the impact of a blow, one would have thought that he could have no heart to return to the attack. The more exhausted he looked at one instant, however, the more fiery was the determination with which he roused himself and advanced into the centre of the ring the next. He would get through Schonrath's defence with a blow that made even that strong man breathe a " Whoof! " Then they would become entangled in each other's arms, aiming sleepy blows at each other's bodies, like two weary Titans all but overcome with slumber, till the referee slapped them on the arms and cried " Break! " And so the fight continued, the aggressive war-dance of Foord and the bear-like advances of Schonrath to encounter it, while, at every blow struck the spectators shouted enthusiastically. At length, the last bell brought the last round to a close, and Foord's arm was raised in the air as a signal that he had won on points. Part of the audience booed loudly, for, among the spectators at a boxing match, there is no nonsense about its being unsportsmanlike to question the decision of the referee. I thought myself the German had won, but then I happened to know nothing about it and to know that I knew nothing about it.

The next bout was between two small boys, and a considerable part of the audience treated it as an interval and went off to the bars for a drink. A quarter of an hour later they were all in their seats again, chattering excitedly about the fight that was to follow between two flyweight world-champions, Jackie Brown of Manchester, and Midget Wolgast of America. It is a little difficult to understand how the world can possess two fly-weight world champions at the same time. The explanation is that Midget Wolgast is recognised as world-champion in the four states of New York, Pennsylvania, California and Massachusetts, while Jackie Brown has been crowned world-champion by thirty-six American states, the International Boxing Union, and the British Boxing Board of Control. As the boys made their way with their seconds to the ring the organ played to an accompaniment of hoarse and rapturous shouting. A scarcely audible M.C. stood in the ring and did his best without the aid of a megaphone to introduce the fighters to us. Jackie Brown, being from Manchester, received the fiercer uproar of welcome, but a dark youth beside me stood up and made almost as much noise as the rest of the audience on behalf of Wolgast. " Why do you want him to win ? " somebody asked him. " He's an Italian," said the young man ; and, putting his hands round his mouth, he yelled : " Go on the Wop ! Up the Wops ! " Dressing gowns were removed, gloves fixed, and everybody except the boys and the referee tumbled out of the ring. The boys shook hands and began to dance up and down on the floor as though it were charged with electricity. Jackie became the dancing centre of a circle round the circumference of which Midget danced, dodging every attempt to advance upon him till he saw an opportunity to get in a crashing blow. He danced in a crouching attitude, his head seeming to be no higher at times than Jackie's waist, and, as he raised his head, Jackie would shoot out an arm like lightning, and strike a perfect blow on a space of air where Midget's head had been an instant before. Midget's elusiveness, however, did not mean that he was unwilling to fight. He was obviously waiting for Jackie to tire himself out with hitting the air, and no sooner did he see an opening than he ceased to crouch, and with an arm even swifter than Jackie's struck with all his might between Jackie's nose and eyes. It was an old trick in which Jackie worked the harder with his fists and Midget with his legs, while, at every blow that Midget got in, the Italian beside me yelled : " Go it, Midget, knock his block off ! " And the man next him yelled in support : " So as his mother wouldn't know him."

It was not so easy, however, to knock Jackie's block off. He, too, has a fine head for dodging, and some of Midget's best blows that were meant for the block reached only empty air, at which Jackie's supporters roared with joy. Both boys fought with the eagerness of bantam-cocks, and, when they stood body to body, pounding each other's ribs, like drummers playing a tattoo, their arms worked so fast that if they had worked any faster they would have been insensible. For the most part, however, Jackie's courage was wasted. Midget has been called the will-o'-the-wisp of the ring and to fight him must be like trying to catch a swallow's shadow. There was one round in which scarcely an effective blow was struck. Even so, there were enough blows struck in the course of the evening to draw from strong silent men cries of joy such as " Good shot ! " " That was a beauty ! " " Let him have it, Jackie ! " and even from one barbarous spectator " Kick him, Midget ! " But the great pleasure of the evening was to watch heroic skill being baffled by skill even greater and equally heroic. The Midget, combining the tactics of Fabius and Proteus, must be one of the world's wonders.

When he was awarded the victory there was an uproar of protest and booing, and, to quell it, Jackie went up to the Midget and put his arm round him. Then he held up his arm to the spectators and laughed at them. It was a good and high-spirited fight, by the end of which the Midget had certainly proved the truth of his noble saying to one who had spoken of the necessity of becoming acclimatised to England : " You can take it from me that acclimatising squawks are just bolony."

Y. Y.

TOOTH AND CLAW

WHY is there a Conference on African Fauna which meets in London ? Why should African fauna be preserved ? And if it is to be protected, what is at the back of it all ? But so many interests are opposed and there has been so much muddled thinking in the past that it is not easy to disentangle the relevant issues. The issues are not the same to the natives of Africa and to Europeans ; the various societies concerned with the protection of fauna have also divergent ideals ; Government and farmers are confronted with interests just as contradictory. Nevertheless, there is an urgent need for us to assess the situation with more sincerity than it generally receives, and if in the process we can clear the question of cant and humanitarian hypocrisy, so much the better. Civilisation is not protecting animals for their good, but for what it can get out of them ; so it would be as well for us to decide what exactly is this benefit that we derive from African fauna.

Before European intervention, and indeed till comparatively recent years, the African, when he considered the question practically and not in terms of a mystic brotherhood of man and animal, looked upon his fauna as a mixed blessing, a nuisance and a benefaction combined. They raided his cultivation, now and then killed his live stock, and not infrequently took toll of their human " brothers." On the other hand, they provided the necessary meat for human consumption and a sport far more exhilarating and fair to the animals than is possible under our dispensation. Whether they realised it consciously or not, the sport kept African hunters physically fit, a subsidiary benefit which cannot be lightly discounted in face of modern, more effeminate tendencies ; for we cannot get away from the unpleasant fact that the protected African is becoming rather a lizard both physically and morally.

These social and anti-social aspects of African fauna were nicely balanced, and the struggle between man and animal was so even that despite snares and arrows and spears there seems to have been no serious danger that the fauna would be exterminated or even appreciably diminished. At any rate they still persisted in their depredations on growing crops and live stock, and any undue mortality was instantly checked by the almost automatic imposition of a tabu which protected the threatened species till it recovered its vitality.

One unappreciated result of all this was that the balance of nature was never seriously affected. True, Africans did not realise this and did not appreciate the oecological virtues of even apparently valueless game ; but the effect was there notwithstanding and they did not have to contend with the disharmony which the disappearance of even a single species may cause. How valuable the most reprehensible fauna may be in this direction is only being slowly understood by our growing experience, and it is this aspect of the situation which makes game preservation imperative, whatever we may think of the other arguments.

A couple of concrete instances will, perhaps, make our meaning clearer. The enormous increase of locusts in Algeria, involving as it does a serious economic loss, is due to the wholesale destruction of the smaller bustards, quails and partridges. According to a French investigator a quail consumes daily sixty grammes of food, which is approximately a thousand locusts. His article concludes in the following terms : " Here in part is a remedy at last, supplied by nature at no cost to the settler or authorities. Unfortunately, however, the East African native captures and trades these useful birds in enormous quantities, without let or hindrance."

Our second example is taken from a recent report by the Game Warden of Tanganyika Territory, in which reference is made to the increasing depredations of baboons and wild pig on native cultivation. " It is considered," the reports add, " that the increase in their numbers may be due to the fact that many leopards are trapped annually by natives for their skins, for which there is a good market."

In both these instances the natural balance has been rudely disturbed by man, to man's ultimate disadvantage, but they are both due to new economic factors which did not operate in the undisturbed primitive societies. We may sum up the pre-European situation, therefore, in the following simple terms. Game was a necessity for man, as it provided him with the meat which, for reasons largely ritual into which we need not go, his domestic stock could not provide. It also unconsciously aided his physique, gave him a recreation, and contributed to the harmonious co-operation of natural forces. Against this must be set the appalling ravages that game made both on crops and live stock. This was an additional justification for man's retaliation, but the battle was pretty even and its results did not upset the balance of nature.

New conditions have completely changed the situation. On the one hand white settlement has completely denuded large areas of game, which would be inimical to cultivation. This has hit their native neighbours, who relied on the game to provide not only their meat but also certain articles of personal adornment like ostrich feathers. On the other hand, game has acquired an economic value of great importance. Organised European hunting with weapons of precision provides a considerable income to protectorate treasuries. Consequently hunting by natives for food is either discouraged or prohibited by law, and in order to maintain the supply of hunting fodder Europeans are also restricted in the numbers and varieties of the species which they may shoot. Yet, despite this, the popular varieties are rapidly diminishing under the heavy slaughter to which they are now exposed. In addition to this, new markets have been opened up for the exploitation of certain species of game, as the examples we have quoted indicate, and under this economic stimulus there is a grave danger that game animals may be rapidly exterminated to supply the foreign markets with furs, feathers, skins and scales. It seems probable that, if not controlled, the African would in these conditions quickly denude his country of its potential wealth.

The new factor, then, is mainly economic : oecology has been largely allowed to go by the board, though it will definitely have to be considered before a final conclusion is taken. To put the situation again in its simplest terms, agriculture demands the presence of fauna, though the agriculturist demands protection from its ravages. Sportsmen want to kill the game for prestige or profit, but expect that the supply should remain adequate to their needs. Natives wish to kill the game for food but find that the dictates of revenue impose a barrier to their inclinations. Human sentiment conspires with science in a laudable desire to preserve the few rare species which are in danger of extermination.

This is not the occasion for a moral judgment and in any case the economic argument is bound to prove decisive in the long run. The discreet preservation of game is a necessary supplement to man's other activities, and we have to concede that in a changing world the African is bound to overcome the scruples which largely inhibit the slaughtering of domestic animals for food, just as he will have to find a decorative substitute for feather, skin and shells. His immediate inconvenience and disappointment are, we are reluctantly forced to admit, part of the disagreeable process of growing up. We want the game, but we want it no longer red in tooth and claw : Pegasus must accustom himself to a stable lest he disorganise the traffic.

It would be premature to suggest what solution the Conference will find for this conundrum. Various attempts have been made to control animals, those with the elephant being conspicuously successful. The principle in that experiment was to warn the elephant off prohibited areas rather than to confine him to his own paradise : but obviously what is possible with elephants would be impossible with smaller game, and where these run, the carnivores run also ; while it is really the smaller, the insignificant species, which are far more destructive than elephants. The solution, which on the face of it seems the most attractive, lies in the establishment of National Parks or Reserves, within the ample bounds of which game will be able to live harmless and unharmed, while outside these reserves hunting and shooting regulations might equitably be modified in favour of the natives. Such reserves are not new, but they could be planned on a more ambitious scale and serve wider areas of Africa. Their success has been proved by the Parc National Albert in the Congo, and by the Kruger National Park in South Africa, while if the revenue is to suffer loss by a restriction of sporting revenues, this may be more than counterbalanced by the revenue which visitors pay to observe the animals in their natural surroundings, a revenue which in the case of the Kruger Park amounted to £6,000 in 1931.

J. H. DRIBERG

SPICE

The fact that the King of Siam is a nursling of Eton while Prince Bavaredej . . . is a product of Harrow, lends spice to what would otherwise be a remote and unconvincing clash of arms.—" EVENING NEWS."

" OBSERVE, little Henry," his tutor exclaimed,
" How the papers confirm my advice
That a journalist's chance to be wealthy and famed
Must depend on his instinct for spice ;

" For the rights and the wrongs of this Siamese scrap,
Were they never so learnedly told
To a public that scarce knows the place on the map,
Would leave it indifferent and cold ;

" And to write up a war would be labour misplaced
When its orbit is distant and narrow ;
Yet it makes an appeal to the popular taste
As a match between Eton and Harrow."

" But that's only a game," came the childish reply,
" In which no one gets killed when they're beaten.
Does it make the poor Siamese happy to die
For the merits of Harrow and Eton ? "

" You are young," said the sage, " yet though short of your teens,
You are old enough, surely, to guess
That to make people think what a battlefield means
Is hardly a task for the press.

" If we let our minds dwell on the painful effect
Of the wounds, and the homes they are blighting,
All our innocent pleasure would surely be wrecked
In reading the news of the fighting.

" So, you see, our kind papers did all we could wish
When they hit on this dainty device
For concealing the taste of a carrion dish
By a liberal addition of spice."

MACFLECKNOE

Correspondence

HOW THE UNEMPLOYED LIVE

SIR,—We are told to expect further cuts in the money paid to the unemployed, and this is apparently to be justified on the ground that there is still very little malnutrition in this country. It may interest your readers to know what a few of the wives of the unemployed have to say about their experiences of living on the dole or on " transitional benefit." The men talk more easily, but they know less about the job of balancing a family budget. The following accounts are samples of actual recent conversations with wives of men who have been out of work for some time in the London area. In each case the only source of income was the unemployment allowance of twenty-three shillings and threepence for the man and wife, and two shillings for each child under fourteen.

The first account comes from a woman who lives in Camden Town. Her husband used to work in the upholstery trade. He earned three pounds a week ; but he has been unemployed for over a year now. The family consists of the wife, husband, and two sons aged five and three years respectively. Expenditure on rent, light, heat, and insurance, averaged fourteen shillings and sixpence a week. Out of the remaining twelve shillings and ninepence the woman feeds the family. (At the time of this interview one child was having free milk at school.)

The account of the problems and worries this woman is facing is given in her own words.

> It is the children I get worried most about. I am sure my boys are not getting enough nourishing food to eat. I make stews and puddings for them ; but we can't afford good meat (I buy pieces

> at eightpence a pound), nor much milk. They won't always eat the food that I can get. They want a change. How can I get variety when we have only twelve shillings to spend? I get tired of trying to think of something new. I spend ages now looking in the shop windows comparing prices. I used to like shopping. I hate it now. I don't like going to the big shops in my shabby clothes. I usually shop in the Street Markets these days. The prices are lower, and the people do not notice my clothes.
>
> I never felt ashamed of my clothes before. I was always reckoned to be one of the smart ones when my husband was in work. Now I can hardly afford to buy darning cotton, let alone clothes; as for shoes, if we did not get them mended at the "Centre," I don't know how we should have any shoes to our feet at all. I do what I can about the children's clothes. My sister gives me a few old ones, and I cut down some of mine; I have a job to keep them warm in the winter-time.
>
> This "dole" business makes me feel ashamed about everything. I don't like to go out. I look so untidy. I cannot ask people into my place, I have nothing to offer them, and I hate them to see it so bare; we have had to pawn bits of things. But staying indoors all the time is dull. My husband does not talk much, he just sits about. He used to read books from the Free Library, but his eyes are bad now, and he cannot afford spectacles. I sew a little, mending and patching, and get the food ready. Sometimes I do wonder how we stick—the days drag so. I don't clean the house much. I can't spend a great deal on cleaning things, soaps, and brushes. It is better to have dirty floors than hungry children. It can't go on for ever like this. I expect my husband will get work soon; he is young yet.

The second account is from a Marylebone woman. She has three daughters, of school age. Her husband, a packer, has been unemployed for eighteen months. She has fourteen shillings and threepence to spend on food, after money for the rent, light and heat and insurance has been deducted from the unemployment benefit.

> I find it a terrible job trying to feed the children. They turn up their noses at so many things. They get tired of bread and marge. I try and give them puddings, rice and macaroni. I buy sixpenny bits of steak, and cooked meat-pies. But there is not much money for extra things. Sometimes I get behind with the rent. I hate doing that, only it is the only way to get money for nourishing food.
>
> The winter is the worst time. It gets dark so early. We cannot afford to have the light on much. It is so dreary sitting by a scrap of a fire with nothing to do. If only I could get out a bit, to the pictures, just for a change. My husband and I get on each other's nerves, sitting around and brooding. It is awful having no extra money for amusements, or presents. Everything has to go on food. I had to pawn some of the furniture to buy food with, and even then we don't have enough. I worry and worry thinking of all the different ways that I can spend the money. I look at all the prices and try to buy the cheapest—but worry does not make the money go any farther.

Things do not seem to be any easier in the country. A woman who lives near St. Albans finds house-keeping on the "dole" almost a nightmare. Her husband was a builder's labourer. He has been out of work for nine months. In the following account the wife shows how she manages to keep her family, consisting of two children under school age, herself and husband, on twenty-seven shillings and threepence a week.

> I have managed to keep the children well, so far. I buy them a pint of fresh milk every day. My husband and myself always have tinned milk. I get scraps of meat and fat bacon cheap. Some vegetables we have from the garden. The "Centre" gave us the seeds. We have a good many fruit puddings for the children. We older ones usually have bread and marge. I find cooking so expensive, gas and coal cost a lot. Sometimes we get into debt, then I do without the bit of Sunday meat, and make up the money that way.
>
> It wouldn't be so bad if there was more to do. I used to be busy cooking and cleaning, and making the children's clothes. Now I have no money to buy these things with. The back kitchen needs white-washing and the front-room repapering, but all the money has to go on food and rent. I hate sitting about and seeing the house get shabby and our clothes wearing out. My husband is luckier. He gets out more. He digs in the allotment or goes down to the "Centre," and talks to the other men, and has a cup of tea. There is no "club" for the wives. The men say that we are not unemployed. That is not true, we have not got enough to do, some of us, at home. We cannot afford to work. If I buy a ball of wool to knit my boy a jersey, it means we go without some food. There ought to be a club for the wives of the "unemployed" too—I'm sick of sitting by the window, waiting for the next meal, and knowing that it is only bread and butter.

It is not easy to talk when one is feeling down and out, and there are many things the women leave unsaid. Sir Ernest Newman has recently commented on the remarkably high standard of health maintained even to-day among school children. The mothers' side of the matter is surely also of importance, if only because it is clearly impossible for them to provide, with the fourteen shillings or so left them for food and clothing after rent is paid, for the milk and other protective foods necessary for children under school age.

RUTH BOWLEY

39 Regent's Square, W.C.1.

GERMANY AND SIR JOHN SIMON

SIR,—Why is it that the Disarmament Conference has dragged on so interminably and threatens to come to so lame and impotent a conclusion?

The answer is given at some length in that brilliant and disturbing pamphlet *The Dying Peace*, published a few weeks ago by THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION at *6d*. Briefly it is that the British Government, under pressure from its fighting services and arms manufacturers, stone-walled all the plans (the Russian, German, Italian and American, as well as the French plan for internationalising civil aviation) put forward in the initial period of the Conference. The original impetus was gradually lost. The Japanese assault on China was revealing the foundations of the world's collective peace system as mere paper bulwarks against war, and gave a tremendous fillip to war industries and the war spirit everywhere, not least in Germany. The nationalist reaction engendered by the economic crisis partly caused, and partly was strengthened by, these events. The Disarmament Conference became more and more shadowy and unreal.

The Dying Peace points out that "Our Government prevented the Disarmament Conference taking up any of the proposals for substantial disarmament, so that Germany could not get equality that way. So long as equality was asked for by moderate German governments pledged to international co-operation, no notice was taken. Sir John Simon went out of his way to be melodramatically offensive when the German Delegation asked that this subject should be discussed."

The incident referred to is probably Sir John Simon's speech of July 22nd, 1932, just before the adjournment of the Conference. This speech, which gave bitter offence to the German Government of the time (eight months before the Nazis came into power), was in answer to an impassioned plea by the German delegate that the Conference should recognise Germany's claim to equality. Sir John Simon put up the following striking defence for the resolution which he was asking Germany to accept and on the basis of which he was asking the Conference to adjourn after six months' session:

> There are two conditions which ought to be fulfilled by such a resolution if it is to do no injury to any interest or to any delegation here. First, we must be sure that the resolution contains no commitment which contradicts the essential convictions of anyone. . . . The second condition is this: we must make sure that our resolution is one which plainly reserves questions not now dealt with, so that no one, by voting for it or acquiescing in it, is asked to renounce any principle that is dear to his country. I claim that, by every fair test, this resolution fulfils both those conditions. It contains no commitment which is contrary to the essential convictions of anyone; none at all. And it does most plainly reserve questions which we have not discussed, including a great question which my friend on my right mentioned to-day; it reserves those questions, so that nobody is asked to renounce any principle whatever. You may say if you like, "What a pity it is that we did not discuss this question or that before." It may be so; but you have no right to say that, by voting for this resolution, you are asked to renounce any principle for which any one of us stands. . . .
>
> The question has been most naturally and properly raised, the tremendous question, how, at the end of this Conference, certain States will stand which, at the end of the war, found themselves under a special régime in the matter of armaments. Let no one suppose for a moment that I complain that such a question is raised. Let no one suppose for a moment that I do not know it to be one of the fundamental questions that the Conference still has to decide. Let no one suppose that, in what I am saying now, I am speaking without comprehension and understanding of the intense feeling that lies behind that demand. Let no one suppose that the man who believes in liberty and enjoys it ever turns a deaf ear to a demand which is put forward in the name of liberty. But, at the same time, if between a quarter past six and the time we vote we are going to claim as a right to introduce this great question and have it, as it were, decided upon now, where are we going to stop?
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> (*Records of the Disarmament Conference*, Series B, Volume I, of the Minutes of the General Commission, p. 194.)

It is important to realise that Sir John Simon believed this speech was not only an oratorical success, but a political triumph. He felt he had scored a clever debating point by asking where we would stop if we tried to solve a big question immediately. He never dreamed of asking where we would stop if he went on dodging every big question indefinitely. The speech is a very fair sample of the spirit and methods that have made Sir John Simon what he is as a Foreign Secretary, and have led to the present situation in Europe and the Far East.

The Dying Peace gives a devastating analysis of the effects of the Sino-Japanese conflict on the Disarmament Conference. It also gives sound reasons in support of the statement that the example of Japan has been an important factor in the evolution of Germany since September, 1931. To-day there are striking analogies in the position of Germany and the position of Japan. If we shilly-shally and dodge facts and disregard treaties for two years in face of the illegal rearmament of Nazi Germany, as we did with respect to militarist Japan's violation of treaties, we shall soon have a great war on our hands in Europe. That war is already knocking at the door in the Far East. It bears the label "Made in England." For not only was it nurtured by the policy of this country, but it has waxed strong for vaster aggressions through the arms and munitions we have supplied and are still supplying.

Leaguer

PRIVACY AND PUBLICITY

Sir,—As a fellow victim of Mrs. Woolf's, though no doubt on a far humbler scale, may I say that I have a stock of postcards thus imprinted: "Shall be delighted to send my autograph on receipt of 5*s*. for the Musicians' Benevolent Fund." *The dispatch of one of these closes the incident!*

Only once did I get a reply: "I am a young schoolboy and cannot send 5*s*., but hope 1*s*. in stamps, as enclosed, will, etc., etc." Alas! the "schoolboy's" handwriting was not convincing, and whoever wrote that touching appeal would not make a success of forgery. So the autograph book (and the stamps) were slipped into their "Reply Paid" envelope and posted.

As for demands for interviews, etc., my servant is instructed to say that such must be conveyed in writing; therewith again the matter often dies a natural death.

One is forced to these courses by the inability of so many people to understand that some workers demand peace and privacy even more passionately than what Mrs. Woolf rightly considers the rather dubious benefits of publicity.

Ethel Smyth

Sir,—While fervently agreeing with Virginia Woolf's desire to put a stop to the existing practice of certain papers which ignore every canon of decency in pestering private people, I am afraid her self-denying ordinance would not really help.

After all, it is not the pleased, the indifferent, or even the bored who really suffer; it is the unfortunate victims for whom the activities of the camera man and the reporter mean actual misery and sometimes intolerable anguish. The latter category was well, if to the point of exaggeration, illustrated by the American film, *Late Night Final*, but there are recent cases in England where people have been driven almost out of their minds by the persecution.

Nothing will stop this form of crime but a short and drastic Act which lays it down that every citizen has the copyright of his or her own face, and that to publish a named portrait without written consent is a punishable offence. Neither press nor public would be a penny the worse off. Ninety-nine people out of a hundred would give their consent readily enough and be glad to do so. It is the terribly abused and victimised hundredth who must be protected. Public characters could give a general consent for all occasions. The only exception would be in criminal cases, where the police might desire the publication of a named portrait in the interests of justice.

Geoffrey E. Howard

Ashmore, nr. Salisbury.

THE PACIFIST'S DILEMMA

Sir,—Mr. Gerald Gould is, of course, quite right in thinking that such undergraduates as propose to resist war by the 1914 method of conscientious objection stand condemned for preparing to fight war with obsolete weapons. That is why to declare that in no circumstances will you fight in another national war is an essentially moderate declaration which does not go nearly far enough. If "the next European war" fulfils Dr. Woher's prophecies as to its technical character, the pacifist may indeed refuse to go to the war, but the war will certainly come to him in the form of a merciless rain of bombs and poison gas.

It follows, therefore, for this reason, apart from others, that war resistance (in so far as it has a part in the work of organising peace) must in future cease to take the form of a mere refusal to fight after the actual outbreak of hostilities. It must be mass resistance (based on the working-class movement and organised internationally), with machinery which will be set in motion as soon as a war-like situation arises, without waiting for the actual declaration of war, if indeed there ever is one.

The Labour Party has blundered badly in allowing the Communists to be first in the field with an organisation of this kind. From the pacifist, though not, of course, from the Communist point of view, it is grossly inconsistent to condemn international war whilst advocating civil war. For this reason the British Anti-War Council cannot hope to secure the allegiance of pacifists, except under false pretences. This would not be the case if the Labour Party were to follow up its Hastings resolution by setting up some such organisation for war resistance. It would then be possible for the working-class movement and the pacifist movement to join forces.

82 Ladbroke Road, W.11. F. M. Hardie

[Mr. Hardie was President of the Oxford Union when it passed its famous "King and Country" resolution.—Ed. *N.S. & N.*]

Sir,—There is much in Mr. Gould's article with which we must all agree. Pacifists like other people are seldom quite logical. But I do not think the question of taking part in war can be settled by reminding us of the responsibility of parents to protect their children. When we speak of war we mean international conflict. If one nation which was threatened by another refused to resist by force of arms it might suffer considerably and even lose its independence. That would no doubt be a serious calamity, and we all admire the heroic deeds of Greeks, Swiss, Dutch and Irish in their struggles for freedom, but after all it is possible to live a decent life as a member of a subject race, and the question we have to face now is whether national independence is of such supreme importance that it is right to slaughter multitudes of innocent men, women and children in order to preserve it, and whether in so doing we are not throwing away those qualities of human nature which of all others make life valuable. There are people who think that no cruelty can be too great if perpetrated for the sake of the independence of their country. They have a right to their opinion, but it is only confusing the issue to speak as if throwing bombshells and poison gas into a city were the same as defending oneself and one's household against the attack of a burglar. Mr. Gerald Gould's argument applies only to those who accept the extreme views of Tolstoy on the subject of force, or bind themselves by a literal interpretation of some of the words of the New Testament.

Basil Martin

23 Chislehurst Avenue, N.12.

INTERNATIONALISM OF CIVIL AVIATION

Sir,—Mr. Arnold Forster has not attempted to answer my case against internationalisation of air transport, he merely "hazards the opinion" that such a scheme is feasible. If your readers need any further evidence, Sir Arthur Salter's Allied Shipping Control amply demonstrates the impracticability of international operation of even a stable and standardised industry, and in the throes of a great crisis.

Mr. Forster confines himself to trying to destroy my final paragraphs pleading for step by step improvement; he will tolerate no such thing. Let us examine his own solution.

(1) We abolish all naval and military aircraft; that will undoubtedly cause both us and others suffering in frontier wars; we shall require a larger navy and army; if war should come it will be still more difficult to protect our shipping from raiders and raiding submarines than it was in the last war.

However, perhaps we shall gain on the balance; let us continue.

(2) We all submit to an army of international inspectors. This will be a strange situation for any nation (but then, of course, we ought not to be a nation), and clearly a very possible source of friction. But again it may be worth it; we go further.

(3) We internationalise all civil air transport. I contend that this is impracticable. However, let us assume that it is done.

And now what will prevent the use of aeroplanes in war, if war should unfortunately come? The civil industry will exist and a great industry it will become. Private aeroplanes and large (internationalised) air transport will be flying; both can be commandeered (Mr. Forster is plainly doubtful how to get over this point) or duplicated. Will any nation that has broken pacts of peace, will a nation invaded by an aggressor or one suffering the slow agonies of blockade, fail to utilise any means to hand to remedy the position? Is it preferable to be bombed broadcast by large numbers of civil aeroplanes, not adapted for accurate warfare and governed by no shadow of restrictions, than to have hope of confining the attack? Shall we be happy to suffer bombing without defences, for our only defence will be the broken pact?

We all desire peace. Can it be truly said that air forces will create a war? I hold that they will encourage peace. So long as wars were to be waged (by assumption) on foreign soil behind a screen of paid fighters, so long might we fear that jingoism or interest might lead a nation into aggression; the fact that the air brings war home to all of us (though not, we hope, to our homes) must surely exert a steadying influence.

Aircrafts, tanks, super-dreadnoughts, long-range guns and submarines have all been called weapons of aggression; it is too easily assumed that if they disappeared the world would be at peace. Let those who think in these terms ponder the words of M. Tardieu, who pointed out that none of these things existed in the early part of this century and yet the tension was extreme; "the world did not feel, *and had no right to feel*, more secure then than it does to-day." J. A. CHAMIER

Air League of the British Empire,
19 Berkeley Street, W.1.

SIR,—Mr. Arnold-Forster has admirably demolished the majority of Air-Commodore Chamier's grievances against the internationalising of civil aviation. A few wobbly ninepins alone have been left standing as targets for less sure and skilled attack.

One of Air-Commodore Chamier's unhappiest plaints appears to be lack of precedent. (There is no precedent for blotting out a civilisation from the air, but no one doubts that hideous possibility). The same nib which inscribed that difficulty records elsewhere the success of the International Sleeping Car Company, that its "overheads . . . have been remarkably low and nationalism on the board or committee has been eschewed," that "difficulties have arisen (and have been overcome)." Is this not just the precedent he requires? Of course it is on a smaller scale and its difficulties are on a smaller scale, but wasn't the first amazing aeroplane built from a model?

Meanwhile his vaguely hinted alternative of slow and cautious progress, dependent on paper assurances of "moderation," leaves us helplessly in the grip of the air danger which (a gracious admission) "exists." It not only "exists," it looms, menaces, threatens to devastate our civilisation. Destruction will not be slow and gradual, and measures to avert it must themselves be as swift and direct as possible. Moreover, air traffic is expanding rapidly and an undertaking already "complicated and cumbrous" will increase in complexity with corresponding speed. And the codification of regulations (which must, of course, be framed to admit of revision), already "difficult to conceive of," will recede farther from the possibility of conception as air services grow more thickly swathed in nationalist red tape.

Collaboration between national air lines, evolving into bilateral and thence multilateral conventions—are these things any more likely to be achieved without those regrettable "jealousies and heart-burnings" by which, indeed, all attempts at international co-operation seem inevitably to be hampered? A World Airways scheme would be meaningless without aerial disarmament, and the greater and more rapid the progress achieved towards these two ends, the less dangerous will the incidental wranglings become. The "patience and persistence" so wisely advocated will in any case be amply required.

Discussion of negative peace plans is growing disheartened. To urge now a World Airways plan, constructive as it is and conducive to international welfare in every sense, would have an invaluable effect in dissipating the suspicion and defeatism rampant among the nations.

The scheme is "satisfactory from the purely civil point of view"—precisely what we want. What further "conditions of security" does the military mind ambitiously desire?

25 Oakwood Road, N.W.11. FRANCES M. COLLINS

THE DOLE

SIR,—Many people, who have never seen a summons for rates, or a broker's man, or a dinner-time without any dinner, are under the impression that the only condition needed to secure an everlasting "dole" is unemployment. May I disillusion them? I am forty-eight, married and unemployed; for years I have had my own business, but "economic blizzards" swept it away, and for the last three years I have had odds and ends of insurable employment, when I have been required, by law, to pay weekly subscriptions to the Ministry of Labour. I have collected twenty stamps on my insurance card, and being without work and at the end of my resources I applied to the Labour Exchange for transitional benefit.

A statement of my case was taken and after a week I was told that I was not eligible for unemployment benefit, but would I supply further particulars for transitional benefit, which was what I had asked for in the first place. Further particulars were taken and another week elapsed, when an official came to my home (four weeks in arrears for rent, by the way) and producing another formidable form took further particulars. Three more days passed and I was called before a committee where I underwent a cross-examination. By this time things were pretty desperate, so I applied to the public assistance officer. To him I restated my case and was told to come again the next day. I did, and was informed that my claim had been passed by the committee and I was referred to the Labour Exchange. Here I was told that nothing had come through yet, so I waited another week when I received a notice to attend the Court of Referees in four days' time. I went, and after undergoing a further examination, had a form handed to me intimating that my claim was rejected. I was, however, given the comforting information that if I was younger I might have been granted the "dole."

I should like to add that all officials treated me with the greatest politeness, which is something to be thankful for in a world where a man in the prime of life, with brains and a clean record, cannot find work to provide for the day that is passing over his head.

Among the few things I have left is a little pride, so I ask you to suppress my name and address and I will subscribe myself,

A SOCIAL OUTLAW

THE ASSYRIAN MASSACRE

SIR,—The official denials of your reports of the Assyrian massacres by General Jaafar Pasha, the Iraqi Minister, are interesting. May I quote the following?

Manchester Guardian (August 21st). . . . A second telegram from Nuri Pasha (Iraqi Foreign Minister):

"No massacre took place in Iraq. The only fighting was between *armed* Assyrian rebels. . . . The fighting was limited to those rebels . . . all loss of life was among these fighting parties and the Government forces only . . . etc."

Daily Telegraph (August 23rd):

"General Jaafar Pasha denied last evening the statement . . . that the Iraqi Government were a party to the massacre of Assyrian women, children, or old men."

Times (October 21st), reporting the speech at Geneva of General Yassin Pasha, Iraqi Foreign Minister:

"But during the necessary repression of the revolt excesses had unquestionably been committed by the Iraqi Regular Troops; Irregulars had been allowed to pillage villages and innocent persons had suffered. The Iraqi Government deplored these excesses."

A Government censorship that is so strict that it misleads its own Ministers upon important points appears Gilbertian.

Cavalry Club, PHILIP S. MUMFORD
127 Piccadilly, W.1.

DEATH ON THE ROADS

SIR,—If it were made as dangerous and uncomfortable for a motorist to kill a member of the general public as a policeman there would undoubtedly be a great diminution in the number of road casualties; it would appear, therefore, that the line of cure must be increased penalties.

If by some combination of circumstances during, say, any twenty-four hours next week instead of the usual bag of road victims including mainly the infirm and children, the following figured among the dead and injured—Six policemen, three peers, two M.P.s, four bishops, two film stars, one jockey, and one well-known footballer—legislation in a hurry would come.

Derby Cottage, Freshfield, Lancs. H. P. BLUNT

Miscellany

STANLEY BALDWIN

Low has not, perhaps, shown us the pleasantest aspect of Baldwin. It is an unmistakable likeness, but it represents the fellow when he is nervously making an uncongenial speech. At such times he is indistinguishable in appearance from a rather pompous, heavy, and stupid director of a joint-stock company. Often he is like that. For a man who has been Prime Minister of Britain he is singularly slow-moving, slow-speaking, and slow-thinking. These qualities were responsible for his sudden rise to power in 1923. The country had reacted against the agility, the restlessness, the brilliance, and the unexpectedness of Mr. Lloyd George. It wanted somebody who couldn't be suspected of cleverness, who would be solid and cautious and dull, and Stanley Baldwin, who had reached the age of fifty-six and sat in Parliament for thirteen years without being noticed, seemed to fill the bill.

There is, however, another Baldwin. A writer in the *Nation* of May 26th, 1923, knew this Baldwin, and was the first to describe him in print.

> The public get a wrong impression if they think of the new Prime Minister as a plain business man, the son of Baldwins Limited. Like Mr. Bonar Law, Mr. Baldwin fancies himself sometimes in this pose. But it is much more appropriate to think of him as the nephew of Mrs. Kipling, Lady Burne-Jones and Lady Poynter. His literary gifts, his power over the word, a certain artistic quality in his choice of key and mood in making a speech, his wit and easy taste have done much more than iron-mastering to bring him where he is.

This is the Baldwin who has given his Party so many shocks, delighted so many non-political gatherings with his whimsical musings, flummoxed Lord Beaverbrook, and retained the Conservative leadership while men like Mr. Churchill and Mr. Amery still languish on the back benches. The first appearance of this Baldwin in the House of Commons made a profound impression. It was in 1925, when a private member of his Party had proposed a hostile move against the Trade Unions. Everybody was expecting an ill-tempered debate. The stage was set for fierce dissension. The diehards were out for the blood of the Unions. The Prime Minister was thought to be in a difficult position from which he was unlikely to extricate himself with dignity. He spoke in his usual way, slowly, nervously and haltingly. Yet when he sat down he was the master of a united House of Commons, and the cheers were among the most tumultuous ever heard in Parliament. How had he done it? By talking about his own family business and its fine traditions; about the days when strikes and lock-outs were unknown, when "nobody got the sack," and "a large number of old gentlemen used to spend the day sitting on the handles of their wheel-barrows and smoking their pipes." It was not by argument, but by "a certain artistic quality in his choice of key and mood" that he won that resounding victory.

An internal conflict between the iron-master and the literary artist may perhaps give us the key to this odd character. The artist would not allow the iron-master to make a profit from armaments, but surrendered one-third of his capital to the State. He hated the "hard-faced men" in the 1918 Parliament, who looked "as if they had done very well out of the war." He was profoundly moved by the sacrifice of young lives, and has dedicated his own life to their memory. This has made him care more than any other member of the present Government for peace and disarmament. "The Right Honourable Gentleman," said Mr. Lloyd George recently, "has a habit now and again of stumbling on the truth and then picking himself up and going on as if nothing had happened." It may not be purely fanciful to suggest that it is the artist in Baldwin who stumbles on the truth, and the iron-master, rather shocked and offended, who picks himself up and goes on in the old Conservative groove. Who can doubt that the two Baldwins dislike one another? It will be exciting if the artist ever gets the upper hand.

PERHAPS

the explosion of a bomb
the submarine—a burst bubble filled with water—
the chancellor clutching his shot arm (and that was Perhaps
a put-up job for their own photographers)
the parliament their own side set afire
& then our party forbidden
& the mine flooded, an accident I hope

motorcycles wires aeroplanes cars trains
converging at that one town Geneva
top-hats talking at edge of crystal healing lake
then mountains

we know this from rotating machines
from flanges stamping, cutting, sicking out sheets from paper rolls.
The newsmen run like points of compass: their arms are
gusts that carry sheets of mouldy paper:
our eyes mud those scraps rub on.

In his skidding car he wonders
when watching landscape attack him
"is it rushing? (I cannot grasp it) or is it
at rest with its own silence I cannot touch?"

Was that final when they shot him? did that war
lop our dead branches? are my new leaves splendid?
is it leviathan, that revolution
hugely nosing at edge of antarctic?

only Perhaps. Can be that we grow smaller
donnish and bony shut in our racing prison:
headlines are walls that shake and close
the dry dice rattled in their wooden box.

Can be deception of things only changing. Out there
perhaps growth of humanity above the plain
hangs: not the timed explosion, oh but Time
monstrous with stillness like the himalayan range.

Stephen Spender

ALSACE, 1920

The recent General Strike at Strasbourg and the news that its worthy burgesses have been scavenging their own streets at the bidding of their Communist Mayor recalls doughty deeds that were done in that city thirteen years ago. The first General Strike that broke out in Alsace, within less than a year of the Peace Treaty restoring the province to France, went almost unrecorded in the English press, preoccupied as it was with civil war in Ireland and Councils of Action at home. There were but half a dozen Englishmen living in Strasbourg at the time—most of them at the University; another was a deserter from the army who conducted Strasbourg's first jazz band; one was a newspaper correspondent (myself). The world, such of it as had survived, felt very young in 1920, and it was not only an eighteen-year-old journalist who expected every strike to be followed by revolution. Yet there was little reason for revolutionary agitation in Alsace just after the war. From the day when the French troops marched in, cheered by girls in Alsatian costume (who had been hastily recruited from the houses of ill-fame in the Rue des Pêcheurs), France behaved with superb tact towards the German-speaking population. The leader of the Socialists in the Bas-Rhin Department, then a bitter man (now a most patriotic French Deputy), and the Mayor of Strasbourg, likewise a Socialist, were treated by the military authorities with a consideration scarcely less than that accorded to M. Millerand as High Commissioner for Alsace and Lorraine. A very real freedom was enjoyed by Alsatians of every kind. The press was German except for one paper printed in the very house where Gutenberg set up his press in the fifteenth century and on machinery almost as primitive. The storks who had been frightened away by gunfire in the Vosges during the war returned. I spotted the first in the small hours of one spring morning, and when I telegraphed to my paper that it had nested on the roof of the house where Rouget de Lisle composed the " Marseillaise," the story within twelve hours had been republished all over France.

But graver matters were in the air; it was certainly not tactful of the Alsatian Trade Unions to choose to declare their General Strike at the moment when the French Socialist Party Congress, held in Strasbourg, was about to disperse and so to hold up the trains in which the delegates intended to return home. It had been, or seems so, in retrospect, a somewhat historic occasion—the last Annual Congress of the old Party of Jaurès which was to break up at Tours a few months later when the Communist majority captured the machine. It must also have been almost the last occasion on which Mrs. Philip (now Lady) Snowden, who attended as a representative of the I.L.P., delivered a really revolutionary speech. (" We have offered to affiliate to the Third International. We await Moscow's answer." Loud cheers.) But as the English, alone among the various foreign " fraternal delegates," failed to deliver their speeches in French, their performance was on the whole tame compared with the rest of the proceedings. I can still see Raimond Lefêbre, patrician, poet and revolutionary, denouncing Renaudel and the Right Wing Socialist leaders who supported *l'union sacrée* during the war. A voice from the pacifist, Centre group asks why the speaker himself fought as a volunteer—for Lefêbre, rejected for service on medical grounds, nevertheless contrived to enlist and covered himself with glory at Verdun. " *Camarades*," cries Lefêbre, " *chers camarades, je voyais la patrie envahie. . . .*" As one man the whole Congress rose to its feet and cheered. Then the Right Wing broke into the " Marseillaise," the Left Wing retorted with " L'Internationale," and the Centre stamped and waved their order papers in the air, crying to right and to left of them, " *Chers camarades, chers camarades*," while Longuet (Karl Marx's grandson), in the chair, thumped the presidential table and rang the presidential bell for silence. At last order was restored, and Lefêbre was left standing, as he had remained throughout the pandemonium, pale and immobile with arm outstretched. Then without a word he turned and marched out, accompanied by the entire Communist half of the delegates, and the proceedings were suspended until they could be coaxed back.

Meanwhile, after I had spent two hours at the telephone trying to dictate an eighty-word report of the Congress over the single, atrocious trunk line from Strasbourg to the Paris office of my paper, I was told that it was contrary to the latter's policy to print any news about the Labour movement " unless sufficiently sensational." A little later they got what they wanted, and I nearly got deported from France for my pains.

A mild remnant of wartime D.O.R.A. remained in force at that time requiring the *cafés* to shut at 11 p.m. After that hour night-life continued behind closed doors, the uniformed police calling every night and the plain-clothes men once a week to collect their bribes. Soon after the events related I was sitting drinking champagne cocktails at 3 a.m. with my friend the Chief of the Surêté, in our favourite *boite de nuit*, when the plain-clothes men entered. The presence of their chief did not usually affect them, but on this occasion the unwelcome visitors insisted on clearing the house. " We are not policemen," they said, contemptuously refusing the *patron's* money. " We are strike pickets. The General Strike breaks out in an hour's time. Please do not be alarmed; we are only anxious that everyone should get home before the lights are cut off and we take possession of the town."

The Chief of the Surêté was green. One of the syndicalists recognised their enemy, and said, with only the faintest suggestion of irony in his voice: " You, Sir, will appreciate that we feel responsible for the maintenance of order."

I made my way into the deserted Place Kleber. In a corner of the square was a military lorry from which soldiers were unloading machine-guns and transporting them into an entirely unmilitary building, on one of whose upper floors, however, were some assembly rooms with windows commanding the square—while at the back of the same block there was a door through which anyone could come and go without passing through Place Kleber itself, in the event of the latter, as the centre of the town, falling into the hands of the mob (as actually happened a few hours later). No other available house in the square enjoyed the same tactical advantages.

It was near the fatal hour of 4 a.m. when I reached the Central Post Office. The little black-bearded Director of Telegraphs was always up all night. He let me write out a telegram to my paper in his office and read it over my shoulder: " Last night the citizens of Strasbourg went to bed without an inkling that they would wake up to find their city paralysed, etc., etc. This is the last message that will leave before the outbreak of the strike, timed for 4 a.m., severs all communication between France and the province for which a million Frenchmen bled . . . grave situation . . . German agents . . . Reds . . . military precautions . . . machine guns."

The Director of Telegraphs was horrified that he should first learn from a press telegram of a strike in which his own staff were to participate. " Ah, but no, Monsieur. They are like Napoleon's soldiers; they murmur, they threaten mutiny, but when I say to them, ' *Allons, mes enfants*,' they will obey me and return to duty."

" I do not doubt it, Monsieur le Directeur, but all the same if you could have the goodness to expedite that telegram before it strikes four I should be excessively grateful."

The Director promised to despatch it with his own hand, and he was as good as his word. A few minutes later we were plunged in darkness; on the last stroke of four there fell over the building a silence that you could almost hear—as the countless previously unnoticed sounds, the buzzes and tappings and tickings of the telegraph room, suddenly all ceased.

During the days that the strike lasted all communications were cut off, and the Paris press, as it turned out, having no other news to go on, began by reprinting and ended by improving on the exclusive news my paper alone had received from its juvenile correspondent in Strasbourg. No sooner was the strike over than I was summoned to visit the Prefect of Police, who curtly informed me that the Minister of the Interior at the instance of the Minister of the Affranchised Provinces had directed him to warn me against mentioning machine-guns in any further press telegram, on pain of deportation. I asked whether he questioned the accuracy of my report. He did. I told what I had observed with my own eyes. He affected surprise verging on incredulity. " Of course, Monsieur would know nothing about the *mitrailleuses*," I said, " since the town passed out of the effective control of the police and an *état de siège* was proclaimed which put the military in authority." He glared. I doubt whether I thought of the absurd side of a callow youth competing with the pomposity of a grey police official. I was John Bull—two years younger than the century—but with a million sale behind me.

" *Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité !* " I declaimed to the astonished Prefect of Police. " Pray convey to the Minister of the Interior my regret at the error I evidently made in assuming that the tricolour stood for liberty in the affranchised provinces."

Wherewith I strode from the police station to the Palace of the High Commissioner to demand a formal apology from no less a personage than Millerand himself. This could not be, but the chief of the Press Bureau, the excellent Monsieur Bourson, so arranged matters that the Prefect of the Bas-Rhin was deputed to apologise " in the name of the civic authorities," and to inform me that the Prefect of Police had exceeded his instructions.

It was fun to be young in 1920. ARTHUR E. E. READE

PLAYS AND PICTURES

Alex. Reid and Lefevre Galleries

In the catalogue Mr. Ben Nicholson proclaims himself a member of Unit One, but Miss Barbara Hepworth, though also one, I believe, does not: I fear she simply forgot, but I would like to think that she dislikes the name. This passion for commufascist nomenclature is depressing. Among the former's pictures, (17) shows him at his best which is his most abstract and least coloured. Apart from two notes of brick, and one of purple-brown, the picture consists of triangles and squares incised in white on varied grey. This comparative abandonment of colour, together with mimesis (the Picasso-Cretan profiles, for instance), allows his talents full play: the texture and tones take on an added life: his line does so even more markedly, and the picture integrates. (16) and (23) are similar examples. Mr. Nicholson should avoid *punctuation*. In such pictures as (43), where Kandinsky reverberates, he is not so happy: it is a little downheartening, also, to find bits of French newspaper in the *collages* with 17 Avril 1933 on them. 1913 would be a different thing. Miss Hepworth's *collages*, (12), (13), (14), are quite enchanting. Small blond pictures made with graph paper on pale, painted wood. (1) and (6) among her sculptures interested me most, the former being the largest exhibit in grey stone. She is one of the few English sculptors who recognise the individual life in their materials. As regards the hand-printed fabrics on view, some fault in the process lends them a wateriness which devitalises the designs. On the first floor, several of Miss Frances Hodgkin's watercolours seem a trifle murky. The imagination, however, that conceived "The Two Canoes" (22), a picture reminiscent of Chagall; ~~has a~~ magic in it. Whereas in a number of other works the colour is only sombre, and the painting almost dishevelled, here it curls succinctly and suggestively, and the colour rises to the strange. (21), a pink house in St. Tropez, and (20), a figure, are also to be admired.

"Command Performance"

The new musical show at the Saville is a confection of many colours and of the most up-to-date ingredients: tempting, if a little sickly. The chief components are conventional romance and unconventional royalty; all the crowned heads of two Ruritanian States. The show has ebullience. Authors, composers, scene designers and actors have all let themselves go and the general effect is one of merriment and repletion; though if one is not infected by this sort of thing there is not much to fall back on, except some wit of varying quality and a little good acting, particularly from Mr. Laurence Grossmith as a benignant king. Miss Jeanne Aubert is a pleasing heroine, though her manner cloys after an hour or so. Self assurance is the order of the evening. Mr. Dennis King swaggers and Mr. J. H. Roberts is gorgeously suave. The music is appropriately loud. The scenery suggests a possible line of development for the wedding-cake architecture and leafy-glade landscape, unsurpassed so far, of traditional musical comedy.

"Hunted People"

Hunted People, at the Cinema House, Oxford Street, would be worth seeing for the acting of the boy, Hans Feher, alone. But it is a fortunate fact that the most talented child actor that has yet appeared on the screen makes his mark in a film whose director, Herr Freidrich Feher, previously obscure, is plainly of the first rank. The tale itself is of the febrile, detective-story kind, happy ending and all, but the treatment is often of real imaginative power. The terror passages are repetitive, it is true, and their photography is apt to be too expressionist, but the comedy is always convincing and the incidents of the coffin and the wax-works are treated with simple force. This film, indeed, is one of the best that we have had, or probably shall have for months, and forms a fine good-bye to German films before the inevitable flood of Nazi nonsense.

"Poil de Carotte," Rialto Cinema

M. Robert Lynen would deserve the description that I have given of Feher were he still a child. But at eleven years old he is already adult, and an actor of more than normal adult ability. His range is limited, naturally, but within its scope there quivers genius. Of a strangely advanced spiritual development, he happens, moreover, to have a thin little face of obsessing beauty. He should be filmed immediately as the schoolboy friend of *Le Grand Meaulnes*. As a story, *Poil de Carotte* is a folk-melodrama, photographed with a rather saccharine good taste. It is too Carcassonne; there are too many misty farm scenes, and animals are made to sing. The wicked mother overacts. But there is the finely modulated part of the father, and there is the hero—nervous and brilliant as some electric thread, lighting, and somehow validating, all.

THE COMING WEEK

Friday, November 3rd—
Horowitz, Queen's Hall, 8.15.
B.B.C. Chamber Concert, Broadcasting House, 8.30.

Saturday, November 4th—
Myra Hess, Queen's Hall, 3.
Arthur Rubinstein, Grotian Hall, 3.15.

Sunday, November 5th—
Gerald Heard on "Is Pacifism Possible?" Conway Hall, 11.
Film Society, Tivoli, 2.30.
Croydon Film Society, Inaugural Meeting, Picture House, North End, 3.
R. Coppock on "The Fallacy of the Corporate State," Willoughby Hall, 1, Willoughby Rd., N.W., 7.30.
Ernst Toller on "The German Theatre," Grafton Theatre, Tottenham Court Road, 8.30.

Monday, November 6th—
Howard League for Penal Reform, Open Meeting, Speeches by D. N. Pritt, Dr. Hamblin-Smith and others, Church House, Great Smith Street, 6.30.
Chamber Music Concert, organised by the German Refugees' Hospitality Committee, Aeolian Hall, 8.15.
"The Rose Without a Thorn," Duke of York's Theatre.

Tuesday, November 7th—
Dr. Emanuel Miller on "Shakespeare and the Psychologist," Morley College, 8.
Clifford Collinson on "Captain Scott's Expeditions to the Antarctic," B.B.C., 11.
"Henry VIII," Sadler's Wells.

Wednesday, November 8th—
H. S. Morrison on "The London Passenger Transport Problem," London School of Economics, 5. And on 15th and 22nd.
Naomi Mitchison on "Sex and Politics," London School of Hygiene, Keppel Street, 8.
"The Lady from Alfaqueque," Westminster Theatre.

Thursday, November 9th—
Lord Mayor's Show.
Chrysanthemum Show, New Horticultural Hall.
"La Maternelle," Academy Cinema.
R. C. Davison on "National Health Insurance, Workmen's Compensation and Pensions," Morley College, 8.
Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham, Queen's Hall, 8.15.
Kingsley Martin on "The Making of Public Opinion," Kingsway Hall, 8.30.

Friday, November 10th—
Public Meeting on "Armistice—Peace or War?" Speeches by Sylvia Pankhurst, Oliver Baldwin and Brig.-Gen. F. P. Crozier. Memorial Hall, Farringdon Street, 8.

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Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

MANKIND shows the slave's desire to exalt remarkable men and put them upon pedestals when they are alive, and the same instinct impels them to insult and try to humiliate them after they are dead and to deny them any greatness at all. This has been particularly noticeable in the department of literature since the death of Lytton Strachey. Hardly a week goes by without some silly and insulting reference to his having degraded the art of biography which he had in fact brought to life after an interval of a century and a half. It is interesting to study why, at this moment, Strachey's reputation is being so continuously attacked. Not only is there the usual reaction of the slavish souls who, like hyaenas, wait upon the living lion and rush eagerly in to dismember his corpse when he is dead; that, in this instance, is not the whole of the story. Strachey, unwittingly, set a fashion of reading biography which has been hastily turned to profitable account by the book-making publishers who do not wait for books to be written, but plan and order them in batches of a dozen and afterwards conscript what authors they can find and serve them out their subjects. As a result, there are dozens of young men with biographies to write not one in a score of whom will produce a memorable book. Most of these turn naturally to Strachey as a model, imitate him with unrecognisable ineptness, vulgarising, as is natural, his weaknesses, which are more easily mastered than his strong points. Then, when the little work is completed, each feels the equal, nay the superior, of the man he has improved upon—and from that it is only too often a short step to press a claim of originality for his own work by vilifying that of the master he has so badly copied. Thus many of this puny tribe are Strachey's attackers. The pigmies make up in numbers what they lack in weight.

* * *

But below this froth blown momentarily over the surface of our literature lie deeper forces, implacable and ancient—religion that submerged atoll that has died and rotted away at the centre but keeps growing its deadly reef of coral on the circumference, priests and kings and all those who worship mumbo-jumbo as a means to power or for its own sake. Faith, faith in no matter what, for faith's own stupid sake, like *bacillus streptococcus*, is present in us all, ready to flare up when the intellect weakens. In sick communities, like Russia since the war, and Germany to-day, the disease carries all before it and the voice of criticism may not be heard. And it was on this disease of faith that Strachey turned his most withering attack. Scepticism and incredulity are necessary to the reasoning powers, the very medium on which alone they function. The mind which lacks them will make every false start into a wrong foundation. This scepticism Strachey had in a degree far greater than most scientists, the value of whose work depends upon it, but, by one of those complexities of character which he so loved to probe, in him it was blended with a deep romanticism. Thus when he stood watching the presentation of the great public show of the New Clothes, he cried out shrilly that the Emperor (or Empress) had nothing on, and the dream-fabric of a generation vanished; at another time his love of richness tempted him to weave as unsubstantial a garment to drape the character of Elizabeth. It is, however, as a destroyer, as a sceptic, that Strachey is attacked. For mankind loves to close all the windows and warm itself with its own stuffy atmosphere, and can never forgive the fellow-passenger who has no fear of the night air and throws the window open.

* * *

In his own generation Strachey was eminent long before he had published the books which brought him fame, and there can be very few who knew him whose minds did not catch something of his ironical contempt of accepted values and his fiery intellectual heat. Too often Strachey is looked on merely as the author of *Eminent Victorians, Queen Victoria* and *Elizabeth and Essex*, so that the publication of *Characters and Commentaries* (Chatto and Windus, 10*s*. 6*d*.) comes fortunately to reveal his good sense and brilliance as a critic. It is a collection of published and unpublished essays, some going in the disguise of book-reviews, or a lecture, chosen from the whole period of his career, by his brother James, and it shows the development of his style. Some of these articles are naturally of far greater significance than others, but one or two, for me, exactly express the temper of his mind. Such is the review of Professor Bury's *The History of Freedom of Thought*, which appeared in these columns just twenty years ago under the title, *Avons-nous changé tout cela?* a question which, alas, there is not one surviving complacent Liberal to answer in the affirmative to-day. However, nine happy months before the war only a sceptic would have written:

> Freedom of thought, he tells us, was established once and for all in the nineteenth century and we may go on our way rejoicing. . . . Is it really credible that the human race should have got along so far as that? That such deeply rooted instincts as the love of persecution and the hatred of heterodoxies should have been dissipated into thin air by the charms of philosophers and the common-sense of that remarkable period the nineteenth century? . . . The transition from the metaphysical to the ethical species of persecution may be observed in the case of Shelley. The public of the time was uncertain whether it hated Shelley because he was an Atheist or because he deserted his wife. Nowadays no one would dream of troubling to call the most abandoned scoundrel an Atheist. Will the time ever come when it will seem no less futile to accuse a man of immorality?

Strachey shows himself at his most deadly in his review of Matthew Arnold's essays, a review so admirable that it should be read, I think, by every generation, for the philistinism of Matthew Arnold (who imported the word into our language) is as enduring a pitfall as intolerance itself.

> "The world is forwarded by having its attention fixed upon the best things." Yes; *the world is forwarded*. Here plainly enough is the tip of the Victorian ear peeping forth from under the hide of the aesthetic lion. . . . But when he proceeds to suggest yet another test of literature, when he asserts that, in order to decide upon the value of any piece of writing, what we must do is to ask ourselves whether or not it is a "Criticism of life"—then, indeed, all concealment is over; the whole head of the animal is out. . . .
>
> Life, as everyone knew, was the one serious affair in the world—active, useful life; but then literature it turned out—or rather, all literature that was worth anything—was a criticism of life; and so, after all, Matthew Arnold was justified in writing about it, and the public were justified in reading what Matthew Arnold wrote, for they were not merely reading about literature—who would do that?—they were reading about the Criticism of Life. And it is singular to see the shifts to which Matthew Arnold was put in order to carry out this theory consistently. He had somehow to bring all "the great masters" into line with it. Shakespeare was easy enough, for he will fit into any theory; and Sophocles, of course, saw life steadily and saw it whole; but Dante and Milton—a queer kind of criticism of life they give us surely!

* * *

Characters and Commentaries gives a far more complete and interesting picture of Strachey than the volume *Books and Characters* which he chose himself. For there is great diversity here—the subjects ranging from a note on the humour of Dostoevsky to the long, unpublished essays on English Letter Writers with which the book begins. And though I have here purposely laid stress upon those which are destructive of complacency, there are others which are chiefly valuable for their style, from the rococo towering elaborations of which the beams of a searchlight are suddenly flung in unexpected directions. And no picture of Strachey would be complete which ignored the extreme gentleness, the mildness which was as marked a feature of his disposition as the fieriness with which he held his opinions and the irony with which he expressed them. Such gentleness and warmth are qualities of mind which are unfortunately rare in profoundly sceptical people. There was no bitterness in Strachey; the sceptic lived in a world of delightful and absurd illusions; glistening, iridescent and short-lived as soap-bubbles, he threw them up, played with them and laughed with a poet's or an infant's pleasure at their beauty and their breaking. DAVID GARNETT

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GOLLANCZ

NEW NOVELS

The Ladies. By STANLEY HOPKINS. *Harper.* 7s 6d.

Bonfire. By DOROTHY CANFIELD. *Cape.* 7s. 6*d.*

Youth Can't be Served. By NORAH HOULT. *Heinemann.* 7s. 6*d.*

Uncouth Swain. By ROGER DATALLER. *Dent.* 7s. 6*d.*

Mary of Nazareth. By MARY BORDEN. *Heinemann.* 7s. 6*d.*

Modern novels are extraordinarily hard to classify. There are readable books, novels that contain amusing reflections of human life and character, competent and entertaining productions from which we learn something, if not a great deal, about the vagaries of our fellow human beings; and there are novels that, although less competent and considerably more difficult to read, are interesting and stimulating because, in spite of their failure as works of art, they bear the imprint of an interesting mind. Then, of course, there are novels that won't do, novels that have no shape and sequence, neither end nor beginning; novels that reflect nothing save the author's own strained, ambitious face, from which no sound comes save the rattle of his typewriter. Very occasionally, a work of fiction makes its appearance that we can only describe by saying that here, at last, to crown our exertions and disappointments, is a real book. In form and content it need not be strikingly original; there need be no question of the author's "genius," for, assuming that he is a scrupulous and intelligent critic, this is a term he would prefer we did not employ. We may confine ourselves to the assertion that his book has modified our sensibility besides augmenting our knowledge; that to read it has been an aesthetic experience—not necessarily a very important experience, but one quite distinct from the experience of examining a clever photographic record, a mangled and travestied autobiography, or a psychological card-index. It possesses that indefinable air of solidity that we associate with even the smallest works of art.

Such a book has been written by Mr. Hopkins. *The Ladies* is a first novel; but neither in style nor subject does it reveal a trace of immaturity or a touch of personal naivete. It is a serious, slow-moving, but intensely absorbing, chronicle of life as lived in a southern State of America by the four daughters of a magnificent, dignified, empty-headed old man. About Captain Flood, as in the opening chapter he comes stalking, splendid, stiff-legged, autocratic, from the verandah of a dilapidated clap-board house and across the tangled garden to his favourite seat under the walnut tree, whence he lifts a profile, "long and lean and vacant and noble, like an old dog, an old horse, an old statesman," there is something genuinely, but idiotically, impressive. He is the father, the patriarch, the ruler. The tumbledown property is his; the beauty of the morning, his wife and his virgin daughters sleeping upstairs in the shuttered house, all belong to him. Popular, loud-voiced, he is absolutely unaware of his own nullity, and so strong and cheerful that, though he has already passed his seventy-fifth year, he can still muse aloud: "I declare I don't see why people have to die. I don't see what it is that keeps 'em from going on for ever."

But, whatever it is, he cannot prevail against it; and "Mamma and the Girls," who dominate the second section of the book, are left alone, unprotected, unsupported, each girl hoping that her chance will come and desperately afraid that one of the other girls will snatch it from her before it has time to blossom out. Thus they squabble fiercely over the privilege of teaching in school, because it represents a pretext to leave the house and every morning drive in an old buggy through the village, and every evening drive back again, by the post office, the red-brick jail and the general store, down the scrambling, sparsely populated village street. Less fortunate sisters must remain at home, sinking always deeper and deeper into a somniferous, unchanging domestic routine. Half the charm of Mr. Hopkins's narrative lies in his almost poetic evocation of that strange, sleepy, slatternly yet comfortable universe formed by the girls and their mother and their grumbling negro servant and the odd neighbours, or possible suitors, who look in to spend an hour or two of a summer night. The Floods are by no means rich, but living, as they do, on the charity of relatives and the little produce they can raise in their own garden they are certainly not conscious of being poor. Their troubles come from within—from the devils of disappointment and restlessness that rack the minds and bodies of unsatisfied young women; evil spirits that manifest themselves, now in violent and melodramatic nerve-storms, now in long atrocious sick-headaches. Through the calm and contented apathy of their daily lives trembles an electric undercurrent of nervous anguish.

Within the compass of a short review I cannot hope to recapitulate, even briefly, the fortunes of the various women—how Bess runs away; Nona finds happiness by marrying a vulgar, good-natured tradesman, whose outlook and mannerisms she soon adopts; and how Laura chooses that disastrous relic of an ancient English family run to seed, Edward Gay of Gays Park. Callie and Matty stay at home—Callie, a managing, devoted, nerve-worn domestic angel, and Matty, a neurasthenic, slightly nymphomaniac spinster who presently relapses into complete invalidism:

> When she was in bed she reached up to them, childishly, confidingly, and kissed them goodnight in turn. She was asleep in an instant, lying quiet and smiling, with her hand against her cheek . . . She had made her last try for womanhood and failed, and she would not grow old, so she had gone back to childhood. She would go back to babyhood, almost to the womb. Withdrawn into her quiet, darkened room, into her soft, secret bed, fed and drugged and tended, she would never set herself against them or lift her hand to help herself again.

During the latter part of the story Mr. Hopkins introduces a new character, Lilias, the orphan daughter of Bess and her mechanic husband, a young girl as afraid of, and unprepared for, normal experience as poor Matty had once been eager to enjoy it:

> She thought that she preferred cats to all other animals because they offered nothing but themselves. . . . They would give their caresses freely, but they never acknowledged the terrible demands of love. Lilias delighted in this essential coldness. It was what she recognised in herself. She spent her life buying off love with services and affection. . . . Through all her adoration of Laura, how glad she was that her real love, severe and relentless, had been for Edward; and how that Callie's was for Matty, and Nona's for her own possessions. All she wanted for herself was their kindness and affection, and she always felt safest with Matty and Mamma, whose need of love she knew with a sure instinct was turned upon themselves and so would always be content with her service.

A psychoanalyst could "explain" Matty and Lilias, and lay bare the hidden origin of their common disaster. He would do so more dogmatically than Mr. Hopkins; but I doubt if the result would be equally satisfying.

Considerable art has been exercised by Mr. Hopkins in his study of *The Ladies*; but the sections are so smoothly jointed and continuity is so successfully maintained that it did not occur to me, until I had finished the book, to inquire if it was well or badly written. Mr. Hopkins's narrative art conceals itself; Miss Canfield's, though far from being ostentatious, is of a kind that it is much easier to detect. About the whole book, its careful style and painstaking characterisation, there clings a faint flavour of literary make-believe. All the personages are neatly and clearly drawn—the district-nurse, between whose heroic and human qualities the emphasis is conscientiously distributed; her brother, the young doctor, who marries a wild mountain girl; and Lixlee, who sets the *Bonfire* going and then elopes with an old gentleman across the way. Yet somehow Miss Canfield fails to transport us beyond a pleased recognition that we are in competent and practised hands.

Miss Norah Hoult, too, is a competent story-teller. She has none of Miss Canfield's lyricism, none of her undoubted gift of language, and apparently very little sensitiveness to the power of words, that is to say if words are considered under any other aspect than as vehicles of immediate and straightforward expression. But she reels off a plain story with enormous gusto. Plain is her method and plain—penny-plain—the lives of those whom she depicts. Plain are the circumstances in which they move; plain is their response. Here, she announces, is a suburban house. Remove its red-tile lid, and what do we see? A middle-aged business-man embracing the housemaid; a disillusioned bank-clerk yearning for some bigger, brighter and better sphere of activity; a young woman lolling, languishing and sulking, upon a chintz-covered sofa, because her parents do not encourage her to go on the stage. Needless to add, she is entirely untalented and extremely foolish. . . Having established these rather bleak premises, Miss Hoult follows the son and daughter of the house up to London. The young man has two love affairs, both silly, and receives a much-needed sexual initiation from the landlady of his Pimlico rooms. The girl turns dancing-partner, enjoys several brisk scrimmages in midnight taxicabs, and finally falls in love with the married, middle-aged 'cellist of a Blackpool orchestra.

Youth Can't Be Served is a readable book; but the amusement one derives from it is of a somewhat wry and, here and there, one begins to suspect, a somewhat smug description. *Suave mari magno*. . . . I mean, one is never unwilling to read about characters whose lives are perhaps even duller and less fortunately circumstanced than one's own. At all events, one isn't obliged to work in a bank, and Ronald Boyce might have been very flattered—and quite properly—if he had been asked to review novels in THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION. But much of our pleasure must be attributed to Miss Hoult's skill. Her use of dialogue is often brilliant; she knows just what sort of luncheon is consumed by clerks and typists in city tea-shops, and whether the eggs they order are poached, boiled or fried. In fact, she knows her *milieu* from start to finish. Mr. Roger Dataller, author of *A Pitman Looks at Oxford*, though in his new book, *Uncouth Swain*, he is concerned with the period of unrest and unemployment that followed the Napoleonic Wars, has also the great advantage of being among his own people, in surroundings that he knows intimately. *Uncouth Swain* is a well-written and unusually interesting historical novel; but the wicked coal-owner, Sir Bracey Higgett, is of less solid stuff than the proletarian hero.

Mary of Nazareth seems to fall between two stools, but it falls very gracefully, very learnedly and, as it were, in slow motion. Miss Borden's point of view is neither that of the sympathetic rationalist—George Moore's when he wrote *The Brook Kerith*—nor that of the wholly uncritical believer. The Jesus of her book performs miracles—at least, we hear that they have been performed "off-stage"; that he has walked upon the waters and allowed the devils he cast out to pass into a herd of swine—but he is, nevertheless, essentially a human being, and as such a vague and ill-defined figure. Take away the hypothesis of his divinity, together with the glosses since supplied by devout commentators, and Jesus' recorded sayings throw a very contradictory light on the character of the Man who pronounced them. Mary, in Miss Borden's narrative, does not understand her Son; and the Prophet moves through the story an unsolved, semi-divine enigma, a tremendous presence which his background cannot absorb, dwarfing and dislocating it by the fact of His nearness. Mary herself is pathetic and small; Jesus' brethren are ignorant and hidebound provincials. Miss Borden is at her best when she can make imaginative use of some of the material she has gathered from the fifty-eight books whose titles are listed at the end of the volume. Her last chapters, which set the scene for the Crucifixion and describe Jerusalem before Titus humbled its pride, afford sufficient justification for the rest of her work.

PETER QUENNELL

THINGS THAT GO BUMP IN THE NIGHT

The Werwolf. By MONTAGUE SUMMERS. *Kegan Paul*. 15s.

> . . . He severed one of the wolf's paws, which he put in his pouch as the beast fled howling. As he told his friend the tale he drew the paw from his pouch and found therein no paw but a woman's hand with a gold ring upon one of the fingers, a jewel the gentleman immediately recognised as belonging to his wife. With deadly fear in his heart he entered the house to find his wife ill nursing a bandaged arm. When compelled to show her wound it was seen she had lost a hand, upon which she confessed that in the form of a wolf she had attacked the hunter. Not long after she was burned at Ryon. This was told to Boguet by one who had stayed in that very place a fortnight after the thing had happened, so there can be question as to the actual truth of the occurrence.

So there could indeed be question (except as to the burning; that would be likely enough). But by page 228 of Mr. Montague Summers' book, *The Werwolf*, the reader will find himself saying with assurance, "Misprint: should read, *can be no question*."

Mr. Montague Summers is full of simple credulity and scholarship. Some of his scholarship is rather simple, too. He cites as "a recent authority" on insanity a gentleman writing in 1854. And only a childlike faith in the value of information as information would sanction this:

> . . . a young girl named Marguerite Poirier, of the outlying hamlet of St. Paul, in the parish of Espérons, swore that in the full moon she had been attacked by a savage beast, much resembling a wolf. (Espérons is now known as Eugénie-les-Bains, owing to the visits of the Empress Eugénie to the warm sulphur baths here. This small spa has about 610 inhabitants.) The girl stated that one midday whilst she was watching cattle a wild beast with rufulous fur rushed from the thicket and tore her kirtle with its sharp teeth.

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Though the appearance of the Empress Eugénie, her kirtle perfectly unruffled, is a soothing incident in the paragraph, it is nothing to do with the case; she was not even in time to work a miracle on Miss Poirier's behalf, she is what the soldier said—unless she be evidence that, as the wicked do, Mr. Summers may also have recourse to the devil, to a good useful devilling devil, who looks up references for him. It is a pity that the devil, or the author, cannot be persuaded to supply translations; long passages in Greek, Latin (both kinds), Italian, Sicilian and Catanian dialect, Spanish, French, and German must hood a great deal of the information from many readers. Incidentally, that misleading whiff of the East, *Abu wenn diese Sage*, in a quotation from Herman Hirt's *Die Indogermanen*, might be restored to *aber*.

The book bears other signs of cursory finish, or, as Mr. Summers might prefer to say, bearish unlicked whelpishness. The Introduction speaks of " a slight re-casting and in some details a curtailment of the first two chapters," though this has not prevented a great deal of the Icelandic information reappearing in chap. vi. In effect the first chapter begins on page 17, and its first reference number is 74. In the notes to that chapter there are seventy-three notes all standing naked in the open air with no text to refer them to. I understand, however, that Mr. Summers is at his meatiest as an annotator; so perhaps this is all right.

His language is meaty, too. " In bestial rut he covered the fierce she-wolves amid their bosky lairs," is affable writing, and so is " ensorcelled gear " and the " smockfaced amoroso in Aristaenetus." To serious students of lycanthropy Mr. Summers will seem little more than the proprietor of a junk-shop, though some of the junk is entertaining, the Wild Beast of the Gévaudon, for instance, who leaping over a farmer's head murmured in mid-air, " Convenez que, pour un viellard de quatre-vingt-dix ans, ce n'est pas mal sauter," or the heartless impiety of Gilles Garnier, who strangled a little boy with the intention of eating him. " The said Gilles Garnier was then and at that time in the form of a man and not of a wolf, yet had he not been let, hindered and prevented he would have eaten the flesh of the aforesaid young boy, notwithstanding that it was a Friday."

SYLVIA TOWNSEND-WARNER

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MAKERS OF THE NEW WORLD. **Karl Marx.** By R. W. POSTGATE. **Lenin.** By R. P. DUTT. **John Stuart Mill.** By MARY AGNES HAMILTON. **The Early English Socialists.** By H. L. BEALES. *Hamish Hamilton.* 1s. 6d. each.

The first volumes of this new series set a high standard for their successors. Though they are remarkably cheap, they are well written and well produced; and each of them is in the hands of a writer who knows his subject from within. They are, moreover, free from that curse of modern biographical study, the insistence on an imaginary reconstruction of the inner man, usually based on psychoanalytic interpretations of non-existent facts. Here, a plain tale is set down plainly.

The volumes, naturally, differ in outlook. Mr. Postgate has a full sense of Marx's remarkable achievement without an undue anxiety to give him right at every turn. He knows that a great deal has happened in the fifty years since Marx died, and he takes this into account in his narrative. The result is a very suggestive volume, a little tantalising by reason of its brevity, especially in its later pages. Mr. Dutt constructs a Lenin from the angle of a hero-worshipper who is concerned at all costs to produce the official Communist impression. His little book is, accordingly, a brilliant *tour-de-force*, eager, passionate, and vivid, but lacking in the critical spirit. As is now the Moscow fashion, it does less than justice to Trotsky. But it is a living portrait of its subject, and, granted its point of view, an admirable introduction to the study of Leninism. Mrs. Hamilton writes a good, orthodox account of Mill. She has little that is new to say, but what she says is full of common sense. The defect of her volume is that its emphasis on biographical detail tends to crowd out her opportunity of critical comment. We could have spared, for instance, some of the familiar incidents of the Westminster election for a discussion of Mill's superb essay on Tocqueville, or his still living criticisms of parliamentary democracy. What Mrs. Hamilton says was always worth saying; but there are sides of Mill too little emphasised nowadays which our own situation makes of superlative interest.

Mr. Beales has written what is much the best of these four volumes. No one can read his account of the formative years of English Socialism without a sense of how completely he is the master of his subject. Not only does he make these half-forgotten writers live; not less important, he makes it clear how they came to write as they did. His account has humour as well as clarity, and the skill with which its perspective is supplied makes it something more than a mere summary of existing volumes. The next instalment of the series will have to be very good indeed if it is to attain the level Mr. Beales has set.

The volumes provoke one reflection it is worth while making. Much of the literature to which they refer is unprocurable except in a public library or by a book collector with a long purse. Of Hodgskin, Thompson and Hall, nothing is available in print except (curiously enough) in a German translation; though a recent reprint of Hodgskin sold out fairly quickly, and the reprints of Bray and Gray (to which Mr. Beales refers) are being rapidly exhausted. It is very difficult to find Mill's *Dissertations;* and his early economic essays (which contain some of his best work) are practically unprocurable. The French have a pretty complete translation of Marx; a satisfactory English edition is still wanting. And some of the best of Trotsky's work, his *Defence of Terrorism*, for example, has been allowed to go out of print. Books like these are not only the indispensable tools of the historian; they are also an urgent necessity for the understanding of our own times. If Mr. Hamilton has the success with his present experiment that he deserves, I hope he will consider republishing some of the books that are essential to its full understanding.

HAROLD J. LASKI

PARIS AND LONDON

Paris to the Life. By PAUL MORAND. Translated by GERARD HOPKINS. Illustrated by DORIS SPIEGEL. *Oxford University Press.* 10s. 6d.

The London Roundabout. By JAN and CORA GORDON. *Harrap.* 10s. 6d.

Most acute of cosmopolitans, M. Morand no doubt would feel tolerably at home in any town with an airport and a centre of conversation. His map is made up of bulls'-eyes connected by straight lines; he travels by the quickest route to London, Paris, New York, Vienna; their juxtaposition and the subtle variations of the cosmopolitan theme provide the material for impressions. Yet his *Paris to the Life* is Parisian from start to finish. It is cosmopolitan as Paris is, detached, airy and vividly interested, matter-of-fact as well as fanciful. The pattern of life in the streets—the markets, the concierges, priests bending over the book boxes by the Seine, nursemaids and children in the parks—is lightly and prettily drawn. Scenes and characters are charmingly packed into a nutshell, yet M. Morand gives us a great deal more than Luxembourg fantasy. Paris, " the city of the concierge," has also views like this:

> Seen from the heights of St. Cloud or of Meudon, Paris is a system of concentric circles, ringed like Saturn with alternate bands of light and darkness. Far away, beneath a sky reddened by the glare of blast furnaces, lies outer Paris, home of the proletariat and hot-bed of Communists. Next to it, discreet, retiring, the quarters of the older middle class, and at the very heart of all, in a vortex of molten heat, the Paris of to-day, modern and American, like the crater of a volcano in ceaseless eruption.

M. Morand is fascinated by the cosmopolitan scene—even by the fact that it is a scene which repeats itself in different corners of the globe. He is impressed sometimes by mere slickness and a discriminating taste for it, but his criticism of typical ugliness is energetic and keen. This description is true of other towns besides Paris:

> These new ghettos of Europe, with their lean-tos made of old tin cans on which sheets of corrugated iron have replaced the cottage thatch, resemble more truly than ever did the townships of the far American west, the kraals of a native continent, the temporary camps of nomad tribes, and the back-areas of the war zones. Here indeed is the true landscape of the class-war, a country of makeshift, where no one, rich or poor, is certain of anything except that to-morrow will bear no resemblance to to-day.

Even here, though, there are contrasts on which the artist can seize. M. Morand is not obsessed, like some of his contemporaries, by the neutral desolation of the street; he sees the richer and more living, anonymous bustle of faces, legs and backs. The pencil sketches by Miss Doris Spiegel which sprawl over half the page have caught the same mood well. Altogether this " sketch book " gives a varied and lasting glimpse of Paris streets.

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It would be impossible, perhaps (even for M. Morand), to write of London in the same way: impossible to trim its area into even the semblance of a flower-bed. The bird's-eye view of London is disconcertingly blear, without pattern of any sort, whether in rings or blocks; many parts of it, at close quarters, are not much better. Hopeless of ever manipulating a quarter of his material, the descriptive writer on London elects either to write a history of the square outside his window or to report garrulously the conversations overheard in bus, park and public house. Mr. and Mrs. Gordon choose the second method. They cater pleasantly and superficially for the *Punch* love of a black and white world animated by two sorts of jokes, the high and the low. In the no-man's-land between gentility and grotesquerie only the artist is allowed to go, unperturbed by the password of the dropped aitch. For those who can put up with the unflagging Bohemianism of this sort of writing, and a good deal of Mutt-and-Jeff dialogue, *The London Roundabout* provides varied entertainment.

APES AND MEN

Functional Affinities of Man, Monkeys, and Apes. By S. ZUCKERMAN. *Kegan Paul.* 10s 6d.

Many books are published describing the increasing extent of our scientific knowledge. Here is one which demonstrates our scientific ignorance, and on a subject which is of particular interest. The likeness of man to monkeys and apes has been a matter of comment for very many years; in old books they were often represented more man-like than they actually are. Yet, when Dr. Zuckerman comes to analyse what we know or can reasonably surmise about the functional relationships of men, apes and monkeys, we are met at every turn by such phrases as "reliable data on this subject are few," and so on.

His use of the word "functional" is perhaps a little misleading. The object of the book is to extend the basis of classification in the Primates to include a miscellaneous collection of characters, some functional in the ordinary sense of the term, others simply not "structural" in the ordinary anatomical sense. The choice of the adjective "functional" for such characters as the blood groups, the presence or absence of a macula in the retina of the eye, or of certain parasites in the intestine or blood, does not seem a happy one. It is nevertheless an important new departure that such characters, however one may define them, should be examined and compared. They may obviously have a very important bearing on schemes of classification and descent based upon anatomical investigations only.

In general, Dr. Zuckerman finds that the distribution of these "functional" characters among the Primates corroborates and adds point to the main conclusions of orthodox anatomy and anthropology. Where doubt or controversy exists, little help unfortunately is given by this new method of approach. Wood-Jones, for example, has classified the lemurs outside the order Primates. Dr. Zuckerman shows that they differ from monkeys and apes in their methods of drinking, seeing, reproducing and nursing as radically as they do in anatomical structure, but not more so. He rejects Wood-Jones' classification, but on anatomical grounds and not on the basis of any of these newly considered characters. The latter do not seem to throw much light on the problem. Again, we do not know within any wide limits the position of the human branch on the Primate genealogical tree. That certain characteristics of the blood and metabolism are shared almost exclusively by man and the great apes suggests perhaps a close genetic relationship and a common stem. Nevertheless, although Dr. Zuckerman will not admit it in this particular case, it does not seem impossible that such resemblances should be due to convergent or parallel evolution. At least the problem has not been brought much nearer its solution than it had been on purely anatomical grounds.

It is clear that those who approach this book in the hope of finding new and striking confirmation or refutation of old theories will be disappointed. All the same, the general problems of classification and descent are considered systematically from a new angle in a way which not only adds very greatly to their interest but is likely to stimulate further research. The value of this can hardly be over-estimated. There are in addition many chapters which, though they do not throw much light on specific problems of relationship, do give a very interesting account of the general way in which evolution has progressed in the chief Primate groups. Particularly interesting is his discussion of the bearing of sexual habits and social structure on the differentiation and preservation of new species. Much of the book is inevitably technical and difficult for the general reader, but the fresh outlook and the critical spirit in which it approaches a subject which has accumulated round it so many popular and ill-founded ideas makes it well worth the effort it may cost.

The book contains a good bibliography and a number of excellent photographs.

STARVATION DUNDAS

The Life of Henry Dundas, first Viscount Melville. By CYRIL MATHESON. *Constable.* 20s.

It is one of the curiosities of English—may North Britain forgive the adjective!—biographical literature that it includes no really full and authoritative life of Henry Dundas. It is now unlikely that it ever will. The late G. W. T. Omond, who, through his access to the various Dundas MSS., knew everything that could be known about the statesman and his numerous and pervasive forbears and relations, had the task in mind, but he died while still in contemplation of its magnitude. And since Mr. Omond's death Henry Dundas's own papers, a collection of inestimable value for the history of Pitt's administrations, has been dispersed so thoroughly that no student is ever likely to get a complete view of them. There have, of course, been books and parts of books devoted to special aspects of Dundas's career, but Mr. Matheson is the first to make full use of the available documentary material and to attempt a comprehensive account—that is, if we can call comprehensive an account that deals very scantily with Dundas's dictatorship of Scotland and with his direction of Indian policy not at all. The latter defect will be remedied presently; it was due to the fact that while Mr. Matheson's book was in progress Dundas's dispatches to Calcutta came to light and proved to contain so much new matter that he has been obliged to postpone his treatment of Dundas and India to a volume by itself. On the other hand the omission of all but the most summary references to the Dundas regime in Scotland is not excused by saying that it has already been exhaustively treated by Dr. Meikle and Dr. Furber. The suspicion may be unjust, but one cannot help feeling that Mr. Matheson has shirked facing an aspect of the man that cannot easily be reconciled with the hero-worship that he insists on professing.

Henry Dundas was born in 1742 and died in 1811, having just entered his seventieth year—a very respectable age considering the quantity of work and drink he managed to get through. He belonged to a West Lothian family that for generations regarded the law offices and Bench of Scotland as its private property. As a matter of course he began as a lawyer, and, had he chosen, could have stepped from the Lord Advocateship to the Presidency of the Court of Session like his father and his elder brother before him. But his genius was far too exuberant to be content with judicial dignity. Politics was the game for him. He wanted to be a Cabinet Minister. This ambition argued considerable audacity, for hitherto no Scottish commoner had been admitted to high political office. Dundas, with his broad accent, queer locutions and uncouth manners, seemed the least likely of men to overcome the English prejudice. Still, he had some advantages—a handsome jovial face, a constitution that could stand any strain, and a conscience to match it. When he was first elected to Parliament his political colour was not conspicuous, but he very soon saw where his interest lay, and won his title to promotion by a die-hard support of North and the American war. Yet he could continue to hold office under Rockingham, though in fairness it should be added that he refused to hold his tongue—for nobody could abuse Ministers like the Lord Advocate. The only thing he could not swallow was the Fox-North coalition, though it would be extravagant to suppose that he was moved by moral considerations. What the shrewd Scot saw clearly was that North's day was done, and that he had better make other provision for his political future. He managed the affair well by fastening himself on to young Pitt. His reward was sixteen years of office, during most of which he enjoyed a political ascendancy second only to the Prime Minister's, if that. His part was to play Pooh-Ba to Pitt's Ko-Ko. He light-heartedly combined in himself the functions nowadays discharged by the Home Secretary, the Secretary for War, the Secretary for India, and the Secretary for Scotland, besides holding various lucrative sinecures. For some time—mercifully short—he even acted as Foreign Secretary.

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When Pitt went out of office in 1801 Dundas perforce had to go too, and felt so miserable about it that soon he was making overtures to Addington. The first intimation of the new move was his elevation to the peerage as Viscount Melville and Baron Dunira, which caused general surprise and deeply offended Pitt. The intrigue developed and presently Dundas had the effrontery to go to Pitt with a scheme for a new ministry under a figurehead Premier, with Pitt and Addington as Secretaries of State and himself as First Lord of the Admiralty. Pitt was not amused. However, when he did return to power in 1804 he had so far forgiven his old lieutenant and crony that he let him have the particular office he coveted, the Admiralty, wondering perhaps why he should be so insistent on the point. Within two years the reason became scandalously apparent. There was a commission inquiring into allegations of fraud and maladministration in connection with the Navy. Dundas had for many years held the Treasurership of the Navy, and there had been transactions of his with the Paymaster that would look bad if brought to light. His attempt to cover them up failed. The tenth report of the commission contained censures of his conduct as Treasurer that brought his career to an ignominious close. He had to resign; he was expelled from the Privy Council and impeached. His trial ended in an acquittal, and rightly so, for it does not appear that he was guilty of anything worse than gross indiscretion; but, though he was restored to the Privy Council, he never won back to office.

For one who bulked so largely and so long in public life Dundas was singularly barren in achievement. He gave nothing to the country that has endured save a new word in the English language —" starvation." He had gifts enough to be a good second-rate Minister, but no man, however gifted, could do even moderately well all that Dundas attempted. The result was that his average was bad, and as a War Minister he was a national calamity. But if he was the worst of statesmen he was the ablest of politicians. He was a coarse but highly efficient Parliamentarian, and the manner in which he contrived to get practically the whole representation of Scotland into his pocket and keep it there for the best part of a generation was as brilliant as it was abominable. Pitt probably knew Dundas's limitations as a Minister as well as anybody, but he also knew his value as a political boss. And personally the man was not unlikeable. Henry Cockburn, who, although his nephew, was bitterly opposed to all that Dundas stood for and rejoiced in his fall, speaks of him with affection :

> Handsome, gentleman-like, frank, cheerful and social, he was a favourite with most men, and with all women. Too much of a man not to live well with his opponents when they would let, and totally incapable of personal harshness and unkindness, it was not unnatural that his official favours should be confined to his own innumerable and insatiable partisans.

He was in his self-willed, heavy-handed way a patriotic Scot. His offence in the eyes of history is that he imported into the British politics of his day the treachery and contempt of principle that had made the politics of his native land a by-word.

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A GOOD TEXT-BOOK

English Local Government. By HERMAN FINER. *Methuen.* 21s.

Unlike President Wilson, who determined to reform Europe from his desk in the White House by means of fourteen points, Dr. Finer sets out to write upon local government with a premise of thirteen questions. In answering them he brings a quantity of determined labour and passionate exactitude which must command the admiration, if it does not overwhelm the mind, of every student of the subject. His book will be of much value to those who have the opportunity of putting to some practical use the analyses, comparisons, and references that are gathered together among the full grown fruits of the author's swollen orchard.

It is one of the ironies of our local government service that, though it is Tories who have chiefly borne the burden of its operation, and, Tories, chiefly, who have carried out its reforms, the text books upon local government have been chiefly written by Socialists and Radicals. In politics, a man may write a book which fails of its purpose unless sooner or later it is forgotten by all. In course of time its value diminishes with the accomplishment of the changes it has set out to foster. The proof of the abiding value of Dr. Finer's book will be less in the author's own constructive additions to the theory of local government than in his analyses, classification and abridgements of history.

In a series of separate essays which cover as fully as would, by implication, the agenda of a County Council he surveys the development of every side of local government under a variety of headings. It is as if a pilot had taken the reader up in an aeroplane in order to present in an interrupted day's flying a bird's eye view of the sights of a city and the life of its inhabitants, punctuating the flight by means of continuous instructive comments through the connecting 'phone. The reader is taken backwards and forwards from suburb to centre and centre to suburb. The ground, covered again and again, may easily become monotonously familiar. But then, it is not everyone, we should remember, whose ambition it is to become a Town Clerk or a Lord Mayor, or whose wish it is to be taken the whole long tedious trip. The pilot has a list of short trips judiciously chosen with a true feeling for the evolution of his whole subject and its subsidiary topics, and a kindly sympathy for the needs of his passengers. On whatever lines towns may change or inhabitants alter in their occupations and manners the basic structure of Dr. Finer's plan should hold good for expansion and revision.

Dr. Finer, like others who have taken the pains to study this subject, allows his enthusiasm to incline him towards the belief that local government is setting the pace of culture rather than following in its train. Fascinated by the intricacies of the rapid evolution of local government in the course of the last century, he is inclined to attach to its intrinsic achievements the significance which should belong merely to the inevitability of its development. When it comes to considering the philosophy and theory of local government Dr. Finer has been shy about introducing his own opinions and bias into the text. His intention has been to produce as many facts as possible so that readers can construct their own theories of the struggles and evolution of the last hundred years. He has not been able altogether to keep his opinions out of the story. Perhaps uneasy lest he should be misrepresented and the implications of his researches overlooked, he has introduced here and there an interpretation of events in terms of the long-standing struggle between central and local authorities for power and control. He sees the solution of the struggle in the form of an integration of the opposing forces. Dr. Finer's delight in smooth and efficient running machinery leads him to favour a strong central and regional control. This principle of integration is in keeping with the English genius for political compromise, for utilising the man who is prepared to expand to the full what is best in both systems and neglect what is for the time being bad and irrelevant.

TOOLS AND THE MAN

The Carpenter's Toolchest. By THOMAS HIBBEN. *Routledge.* 5s.

This is a short history of the tools to be found in a carpenter's kit; and whilst it is primarily a book for the young, which may well appeal to a boy with a practical turn of mind and an elementary knowledge of carpentry, it may also serve to create in the reader of riper years a thirst for further knowledge in the same vein.

If, in fact, the book appears to be more of a brief outline of history in a general sense, it soon becomes clear that the story of tools is the story of man. The very Ages—Stone, Bronze, Iron, Steel—derive their names from the materials out of which man has made, and still makes, his tools.

We see the cave man fashioning his implements from flint. We watch the progress of axe and adze, saw and drill, from stone to bronze, from bronze to iron. We visit Egypt, Athens, Rome, at the height of their civilisations. We excavate the lost city of Pompeii and discover an admirable carpenter's equipment, even to a plane, a tool unknown in Europe of the fourteenth century. We pass on to the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, our own times. And throughout we have the author's own drawings, many of them excellent, to support the text.

Personally, I could wish for much more about the mediaeval period. There remains in our midst so much of the mediaeval craftsman's work that it is intensely more alive to us than the work of the Ancients. How were those half-timbered mansions erected ? How was the centring set up for those vaulted cathedral roofs ? We are told, it is true; but all too briefly. And yet this is the chapter with the greatest human touch. Here we meet the carpenter himself—apprentice, journeyman, master. We are initiated into the Guild. There is more fact, less conjecture and more that we can visualise as " carpentry."

The last chapter deals, amongst other things, with the American settlers and the development of tools in America. There is room

Spinning the Yarn!

In that endless stream of circulars that runs through your letter-box, speedily coming to rest in your waste paper basket, you may have noticed that tailors just now, with varying degrees of emphasis, are telling you to buy your suits and overcoats at once or you will have to pay more.

This time it is true. Australian wool prices are hardening with an increased demand, more uses for wool are being found in this country and, thank goodness, the English spinners are getting busier. These and other contributory factors have caused a rise in the wholesale prices of cloths.

Readers of this paper will be the last to regret such a development, even if it does mean half-a-guinea on a suit or an overcoat, and that is about the size of it at the moment. But actually only some of Goss's " bunches " of materials have so far gone up in cost, that is, gone up enough to force Goss to increase his prices.

So besides the seasonal call for warmer clothes or fresh " glad rags," there is the probability, if not the certainty, that delay in ordering will cost you something, though, frankly, Goss does not pretend that for some little time that " something " is likely to be more than half-a-guinea on a suit or overcoat, and perhaps not that if you will come along soon.

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for a word of explanation here. For what English boy is acquainted with cedar "shingles" or the method of hanging them?

On the whole it is an excellent little book, amply illustrated, which may well serve a useful purpose, in this age of machinery and mass production, in giving the amateur carpenter, old and young, an idea of the high ideals and traditions of his craft. L. W. P.

SHORTER NOTICES

Business Under the Recovery Act. By Lawrence Valenstein and E. B. Weiss. *McGraw-Hill.* 8s. 6d.

Messrs. Valenstein and Weiss and their publishers, striking while the iron is hot, have here provided the public on both sides of the Atlantic with a compendious account of the Roosevelt domestic programme and its implications. It makes fascinating reading; lively, pugnacious, and full of an endearing mixture of common sense and economic naivete. They look at the situation primarily from the point of view of the merchant, whether retail or wholesale, and wax enthusiastic over the codes defining "fair competition." Reading their account of the unholy devices of marketing competition among transatlantic super-salesmen behind the counter or elsewhere, one does not wonder at their rejoicings. Our own cut-price stores, great free gift offers, and so on, are nothing in comparison. The consumer should, of course, get the benefit; and no doubt in the short run he does. Whether his all-round economic position does not suffer at least proportionately from the instability to which these practices contribute is another matter. There is much here at which the economist is bound to raise his eyebrows. Why these lamentations over the plight of the "ethical" manufacturer of "quality" goods who finds himself undersold by "shoddy" production? If a buyer wants to buy a pair of socks for sixpence, wear them twice and throw them away, why shouldn't he? It is not the selling of cheap goods on false pretences that they condemn; it is that they should be sold at all. Again, why pillory as an industrial crime the selling below cost price of goods suddenly become obsolete? Here the authors go beyond the Dry Goods Code itself; nor are these the only examples. But it is hardly surprising to find reaction rather over-vehement against the lunacies of *laisser faire* run mad.

A Hundred Years of Psychology, 1833-1933. By J. C. Flugel. *Duckworth.* 15s.

Professor Flugel in his preface expresses the opinion that such a book as this is almost inevitably bad; in the sense at least that what the reader will find will not correspond to what he hopes or expects. They who care nothing for any psychology that is not a mere by-product of philosophy will have little use for the book; but readers of a scientific bent for whom recent neurological and experimental psychology has more real value than all the philosophies of all the philosophers will find Professor Flugel a shrewd guide through the stages of its inception. For once an apparently arbitrary period—the volume in the first of a projected "Hundred Years" series—has a certain propriety, for by 1833 the embryo of 1933 psychology can be clearly discerned. Mr. Flugel makes an interesting point when he declares that Gall's phrenology, for all its absurdity, foreshadowed a real physiological approach to psychology, and points out how Mesmer's untenable "animal magnetism" has led through hypnosis to really valuable discoveries. These, however, were but guesses at truth, and it is among the more scientific thinkers that the true line of succession is found. Amid the references to nineteenth century psychologists it is pleasant to find generous appreciations of Bain and Herbert Spencer, and a powerful tribute to the contribution of Darwin. But it is the final chapters in which the modern schools of psychology are analysed and compared that give its real value to the book. It is to the present moment that the whole argument trends, the moment when the psychologist, unconcerned with the mystic entity that may possibly enable its possessor to be unhappy with Achilles in Hades, is devoting himself to the Psyche with which we have to make the best of things here and now.

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About Motoring

THE SIDDELEY SPECIAL

I happen to possess a rather more intimate acquaintance with the Armstrong-Siddeley factory than with many of their rivals'; and that knowledge eliminates surprise at the excellence of their cars. Their departmental heads include a genius in almost every aspect of the complex organisation which is essential to turning out a fine car. In the first place they possess a probably unique knack for producing superfine work in bulk. During the war there was a lamentable period when the Royal Air Force was shouting for high-powered engines, when the supply was grotesquely inadequate, and although the drawings existed no firm with war personnel and war equipment could produce the desired engine in the desired quantities. The Siddeley engineers took over the job, and although their twenty-hour testing shifts robbed Coventry of sleep, engines soon began to pour out at a phenomenal rate, and the engines were more than good in spite of the terrific production rate. While this was going on a corner of the shops was consecrated to a research engineer whose set task was to produce a colossal air-cooled engine for fighting scouts. He isolated himself from a world in turmoil, and, armed with batteries of thermometers, set himself to perfect an engine which has long since become famous. He and some of his henchmen can still be trusted to solve any technical problem with which the modern car may confront them; and though none of them are Scots they can be trusted not to pass a job as right until it is right; in which they differ profoundly from the more effervescent engineers of certain other nations. But possibly the chief curiosity of the Siddeley team is a nameless gentleman who may fairly be described as a middle-aged monomaniac. A youthful monomaniac who thinks, breathes and dreams petrol engines and speed is one of the commonest exhibits in any country to-day; the Shell at most public schools is packed with the type. Examine your youthful monomaniac ten years later, and he has been transformed. Money, fame, power, wine, women or song have claimed him; and his youthful passion is a mere handful of ash. But the Siddeley team includes perhaps the only middle-aged petrol monomaniac in the world. There are a few Britons—perhaps a dozen in all—who always find peace if you give them a ball—it may be a cricket ball, or a golf ball, or a tennis ball, or a football; but a ball of some kind is their primary and fundamental definition of life. The Siddeley exhibit interprets life differently—all he asks is a car. It may be a new car, an old car, a good car, or a bad car. He will drive it, and pick it to pieces, and psycho-analyse it, and anon distil deep wisdom about it. So the hawk eyes of the Siddeley directors picked him out of another job, and for years have given him a ceaseless succession of cars to play with; and his constructive criticisms as a practical motorist play no small part in the firm's triumphs.

The pet bantling of this splendid team is the new Siddeley Special, which made its debut as a bare chassis some twelve months ago and is already very famous indeed as a car for the connoisseur. It laps Brooklands at well over eighty with

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CHURCH ARMY

COMPANY MEETING

RAPHAEL TUCK & SONS, LTD.

NEW ARTISTIC PRODUCTIONS

The 32nd annual general meeting of Raphael Tuck & Sons, Ltd., was held on November 2 at Raphael House, Moorfields, E.C.

Mr. Gustave Tuck (Chairman and Managing Director), in moving the adoption of the report and accounts, said that the times through which the business world was passing were beset with great difficulties, from the repercussions of which very few had been able to emerge unscathed. In spite of this, however, the company's turnover in this country had shown a gratifying increase, which again proved that the artistic productions issued by Raphael Tuck & Sons were appreciated and bought by increasing numbers of the great British public, but this had been more than balanced by the uneasy conditions on the Continent, in the Dominions and in America.

Reviewing the various departments, the Chairman first referred to Christmas and New Year Cards, remarking that this old-established branch had fully maintained its reputation for originality, beauty and efficiency, and the department had made remarkable progress.

The book department had been his own special care for many years. One of the great charms of life was to maintain the bridge between the old and the young, and he thought that his work in the preparation of books had helped him greatly to accomplish this. They had just published a charming novel, full of interest—"Nancy Owlett," by that famous author Eden Phillpotts, which had already had a most pleasing reception both from the Press and the public.

A Calendar was more than an artistic production or a printed design. It was not alone a harbinger of peace and goodwill between friend and friend, but a daily reminder of beauty and friendship. They had the honour to reproduce, by gracious permission, a beautiful portrait of H.M. the Queen by A. T. Nowell, which was exhibited in this year's Royal Academy and was purchased by Her Majesty. They were also privileged to publish a portrait of H.R.H. The Prince of Wales by J. A. A. Berrie, the artist who painted the portrait of the King two years ago.

It was good to feel that Tuck's Postcards were still *the* recognised picture postcards and were to be found throughout the world.

It was satisfactory to record the remarkable headway made by the Pictorial Advertising Department during the past year. They were supplying many of the most important advertisers in the country, who were not slow to show their appreciation of the company's work.

In the Paperware Department the sales showed a steady increase.

Mr. Desmond Tuck seconded the resolution, which was carried unanimously.

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a very capacious and luxurious closed body. If you prefer to buy or borrow it in its open four-seated guise it will do ninety miles an hour wherever ninety miles an hour is possible. Moreover, it is not in the very least delicate. We all know that a film star dolled up by expert hands for a dinner at the Ritz is a very lovely spectacle. The same film star after a night in a Continental train or after a rough Channel crossing could walk down the Old Kent Road without attracting a single glad eye. Some speed cars are rather like her. You have to nurse them and tune them and pet them to get any results at all. But the Siddeley Special might be described in turf phraseology as being by Blue Bird out of a Leyland lorry. She will do her 90 m.p.h. to-day and to-morrow and the day after and the year after, and the year after that. Her speed is stable speed. It is permanently on tap. And with it she combines all the other points of a first-class sporting chassis—silken steering, brakes of leviathan power which never squeal, cushiony suspension, maintained power, finger controls, and the like. She is probably the most dangerous of the many aspirants to the gap in the sports car market created by the untimely demise of the ever-lamented Bentley cars; and unless the Rolls people hurry up with their little Bentley daughter that awaited infant will have to fight very hard for its place in the sun. The real secret of this Siddeley Special is that its engine is the grandchild of the old B.H.P. aircraft engine which powered so many light bombers in the last year of the war. Its metal parts are largely constructed from an ultra-light alloy of great tensile strength, and the engine is decidedly composite. Its main block is cast from this featherweight alloy, and more suitable metals are inset at the points where fierce wear must be resisted. The rubbing area of the cylinders, for example, is a liner of cast iron, mounted "wet," with the cooling water lapping against its outer skin, and sealed joints top and bottom, a device which baffled other constructors of many nations both in the war and since the war. The valve seats are of aluminium bronze, sunk and screwed into alloy heads. The valves are of stainless steel and practically unpittable. The sparking plug sockets are of phosphor bronze, shrunk, screwed and dowelled into the alloy head. A similar expertness of detail distinguishes almost every item in a marvellous engine, implying a knowledge and a workmanship which only aircraft factories dare attempt. The net result is a very light engine, capable of smiling under heats and pressures which would swiftly wreck any power unit constructed on the ordinary mass-production lines. And the rest of the chassis is keyed in similar tones. Original design coupled with superfine workmanship has produced an *ensemble* of which the entire British industry can be permanently proud.

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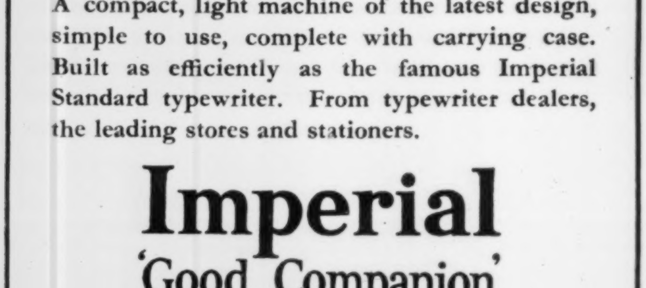

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Playtime

CALIBAN'S PROBLEM CONTEST

PROBLEM 45.—CALIBAN'S WILL

(By M. H. Newman)

When Caliban's will was opened it was found to contain the following clause:

> I leave ten of my books to each of Low, Y.Y., and "Critic," who are to choose in a certain order. No person who has seen me in a green tie is to choose before Low.
>
> One *at least* of the following is true: that Y.Y. was in Oxford in March, 1920; that the first chooser never lent me an umbrella.
>
> And one *at least* of the following is true: That Low has second choice; that "Critic" is to choose before the one who first fell in love.

Unfortunately Low, Y.Y., and "Critic" could not remember any of the relevant facts; but the family solicitor pointed out that, assuming the problem to be properly constructed (*i.e.*, assuming it to contain no statement superfluous to its solution) the relevant data and order could be inferred.

What was the prescribed order of choosing; and who lent Caliban an umbrella?

TO SOLVERS

The above problem, which is of quite a novel type, is the last of my series of excerpts from "Caliban's Problem Book." Beginning next week, therefore, I shall inaugurate a winter season of new problems, which I expect will have a wider appeal than some of the "snorters" recently set. "Confusion at the Rectory" (which has had a wide appeal) represents roughly the standard of difficulty I shall aim at.

PROBLEM 43.—THE STRONG BOX

This cipher, though constructed on recognised lines, has stumped nearly everybody. I will allow another week for solutions.

PROBLEM 42.—THE MILITARY DINNER PARTY.

A set of Low's cartoons goes to J. R. Whalley, 4 Sea View, Amberstone, Hailsham, Sussex. There were fourteen correct solutions.

Ten points are awarded.

PRIZES FOR PROBLEM SOLVERS

One set of Low's cartoons is awarded weekly to the sender of all correct solutions selected at random.

In addition a record is kept of the names of senders of all correct solutions submitted. All solvers qualify for book prizes on a cumulative-point basis. For particulars see THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION of May 6th.

Solutions to the current problem must be addressed to CALIBAN, c/o THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION, 10 Gt. Queen Street, London, W.C.2, and must reach this office not later than the next Tuesday but one after the date of publication.

THREE ENIGMAS

BY TRINCULO

I.

Pressure within; expired. (No—not distressed).
The bailiff came—that's very quickly guessed.

II.

An idiot, clutching silver, take—
He well can represent a lake.

III.

Our Clara, when she's in a "pet"—
A weapon, once in battle met,
  But now not used at all—
And it suggests the etiquette
To follow if you want to get
A dancing-partner, when she's "set"
  Against the farther wall.

Find the three words.

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The Rose Without a Thorn.

GLOBE. "Proscenium." Tues. & Sat.

HIPPODROME. Give Me a Ring. W. & S.

PALACE. Gay Divorce. Wed. & Sat.

PHOENIX. As You Like It. Wed. & Sat.

PICCADILLY. Mon. & Sat.
A Sleeping Clergyman.

PRINCE'S. The Wandering Jew. Th. & Sat.

QUEEN'S. Sunshine Sisters. Wed. & Thurs.

ST. JAMES'. Wed. & Sat.
The Late Christopher Bean.

ST. MARTIN'S. The Wind & the Rain. Tu. F.

WESTMINSTER. Sat.
The Lady from Alphaqueque.

THEATRES

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A comedy by John van Druten.

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An Operetta.
Oskar Denes, Natalie Hall, Rosy Barsony.

DUKE OF YORK'S. (Tem. 5122.) Mon., 8.30.
Wed. & Sat. 2.30. People's National Theatre.
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A Course of Three Lectures on "POPE," will be given by PROFESSOR CYRIL BRETT (Professor of English in the University of Wales, University College, Cardiff) at KING'S COLLEGE, LONDON (Strand, W.C.2) on THURSDAYS, NOVEMBER 16th, 23rd and 30th at 5.30 p.m. At the First Lecture the Chair will be taken by PROFESSOR A. W. REED, D.Lit. (Professor of English Language and Literature in the University).

A Course of Three Lectures on "SCIENCE MUSEUMS AND THE HISTORY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY" will be given by COL. SIR HENRY LYONS, F.R.S. (formerly Director of the Science Museum) at UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, LONDON (Gower Street, W.C.1) on TUESDAYS, NOVEMBER 14th, 21st and 28th at 5.30 p.m. At the First Lecture the Chair will be taken by SIR JOSEPH E. PETAVEL, K.B.E., D.Sc., F.R.S. (Director of the National Physical Laboratory). Lantern illustrations.

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Nov. 12th.	F. M. HARDIE, President of the Oxford Union, 1933.
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„ 26th.	BRIG.-GENERAL F. P. CROZIER, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O.
Dec. 3rd.	MISS K. D. COURTNEY, Member of the Executive Committee, Women's International League.
„ 10th.	HARRY POLLITT, Communist Party of Great Britain.
„ 17th.	ROBERT MENNELL.

No Tickets are required, but a Collection will be taken.

THE WORLD LEAGUE FOR SEXUAL REFORM will hold a meeting at the LONDON SCHOOL OF HYGIENE, KEPPEL STREET, W.C.
on WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 8th, 1933, at 8 p.m.,
when NAOMI MITCHISON
will speak on "SEX AND POLITICS."
Chairman, Dr. Norman Haire.
Admission 1s. Members free.

ARMISTICE—PEACE OR WAR?
Public Meeting. Fri., Nov. 10th at 8.
Memorial Hall, Farringdon St., E.C.4.
Speakers: SYLVIA PANKHURST, OLIVER BALDWIN, BRIG.-GEN. F. P. CROZIER.
Chairman: C. E. M. JOAD.
Admission free. Reserved seats 1s.
Apply Federation of Progressive Societies and Individuals, 21 St. Stephen's House, Westminster, S.W.1. (Whitehall 2408).

CONWAY HALL, Red Lion Square, W.C.1.—Sunday, November 5th, at 11 a.m. GERALD HEARD: Is Pacifism Possible?
6.30, Concert. Chamber Music.
Tuesday, November 7th, at 7 p.m. A. H. M. ROBERTSON: Rationalism; Tool or Fetish?
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THE WEEK IN THE CITY

THE AMERICAN GOLD MESS—PROFESSOR WARREN'S GREAT DELUSION—TIN INVESTMENT—VENEZUELAN OIL CONCESSIONS

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT will make a fool of himself if he attempts to put into immediate practice Professor Warren's mechanical conception of an Irving Fisher dollar. He has the right ideal—a dollar stable in terms of internal purchasing power but fluctuating in exchange value—and when the world has recovered its economic equilibrium and is back on a gold exchange standard it will be easy to regulate the exchange value of the dollar by altering from time to time the prices at which the Federal Reserve banks will buy and sell gold. Indeed, this would be a great improvement on the old gold standard system, and we hope that ultimately President Roosevelt will invite the nations to a monetary conference to consider the general adoption of a currency system managed on these lines. But to expect to lift the internal price level to-morrow by bidding a higher price for gold to-day is just childish. In the first place, in order to depreciate the exchange value of the dollar by the extent of the advance in the dollar price of gold the President must be prepared to buy gold without limit in the world market, but is this possible? Any big flow of gold from France—or any other gold standard country—to America would quickly cause the Governments of these countries in their present temper to clap an embargo on gold shipments. In the second place, even if he managed to depreciate the dollar exchange by the extent of his advance in the dollar price of gold (which he has not been able to do so far) it does not follow that the internal price level will be raised by the extent of the exchange depreciation. This we discovered in Great Britain when we suspended the gold standard.

* * *

There are two delusions which affect many great economists—first, that the world trade slump is due to a shortage of gold, which is Professor Cassel's delusion; second, that the prices of commodities can be altered by raising the price of gold, which is Professor Irving Fisher's delusion. A combination of both produces Professor Warren's peculiar malady. Whether there is a shortage or not, there is a maldistribution of gold, and it is fantastic for America to buy up more of the world's gold when she already has too large a share of it. And to attempt to alter a domestic price level by quoting a higher price for gold in a world which is no longer operating a closed gold system is hopeless. As we suggested last week, a fall in the exchange value of a currency tends to raise internal prices, but the importance of President Roosevelt's new gold policy lies in its psychological reactions. If the speculators and traders fancy that a depreciating dollar is necessarily followed by a rise in prices, they will increase their operations, money will circulate more freely and prices will rise. But the gold-buying stunt has so confused everyone—speculator and trader alike—that the psychological reaction is the reverse of favourable. We hope that President Roosevelt will quickly shake off Professor Warren—he could send him to help Professor Moley in letting off monetary steam in his new economic journal—and get back to honest inflation of the currency which everyone can understand.

* * *

The tin export quotas are to be raised from 33⅓ per cent. to 40 per cent. as from January 1st next, and for 1934 there is to be an additional "special quota" of 4 per cent. The International Tin Committee does not believe in half measures and has ruled that in order to determine the amount which each restricting country may export during 1934 there shall be deducted all excesses of export outstanding at December 31st, 1933. The Governments of Bolivia, the Malay States, the Dutch East Indies, Nigeria and Siam have signed agreements for the continuance of "control" for another three years. So far the International Tin Committee, working in conjunction with the tin pool, has been remarkably successful. The price of tin has been restored to the profitable figure of £225 per ton—from a low level this year of £140¾. Next year will subject the control to the more severe test of preventing an excessive rise in prices due to a "squeezing" of supply. The present 33⅓ per cent. quota is giving a supply of approximately 83,260 tons per annum. The 44 per cent. quota will give approximately 102,541 tons per annum. Deliveries—on an estimate of American requirements lower than the actual deliveries in the June to September quarter—are calculated at 114,000 tons per annum. If there is a sustained recovery in American trade next year there may be a shortage of tin which the unloading of the tin pool will not be able to counteract. Most restriction schemes have failed in the past through greediness, but the Tin Committee, which is cleverly managed, may be wiser in its generation.

* * *

Perhaps the safest way of making an investment in tin shares is to buy the 10*s*. shares of the British Tin Investment Corporation which are quoted at 17*s*. 6*d*. This company was formed in 1932 to take over the investments in tin producing and smelting companies of the British-American Tin Corporation. If it paid anything like the then market prices of the tin shares acquired it "got in" very near the bottom of the market. Its holdings are distributed among the leading producing companies in the Malayan, Nigerian and Bolivian fields. In addition it holds a large interest in Consolidated Tin Smelters, the company formed in 1929 to amalgamate the Eastern Smelting Company, Penpoll Tin Smelting and Williams Harvey and Company. The British Tin Investment Corporation may therefore be regarded as the "Rubber Trust" of the tin industry, except that it is not managed by any one particular interest, its board of directors being representative of the Amalgamated Metal Company and the rival tin producing groups. Since December, 1932, its shares have risen by 50 per cent., but all the leading tin-producing shares have appreciated by more than 40 per cent. in the same period. In all probability the market valuation of British tin investment shares is no greater than the break-up value at the current market prices of its holdings. A maiden dividend in respect of the year ending December, 1933, is expected, but the shares should appeal for gradual capital appreciation rather than for immediate dividend yield. We need hardly add that the "safety-first" investor should not be interested.

* * *

In declaring an interim dividend of 5 per cent. (the same as before) the directors of the Venezuelan Oil Concessions, Ltd., made the somewhat disconcerting statement that the fluctuations of the dollar-sterling exchange will affect (adversely) the company's profits for 1933. Can the distribution be maintained at 12½ per cent. for the year? We can only guess. The gross income of the company in 1932 was £3,085,000 and its production was approximately 32,600,000 barrels. If we estimate a selling price of 50 cents a barrel (the average American price for this grade of oil) and take the average dollar-sterling exchange in 1932 (which was 3.50) we find that the extra sterling obtained through the dollar premium was about £1,308,000—in other words, over one-third of the total gross income. In the current year production is running at about the same level, but the dollar exchange has averaged up to the middle of October 3.878 as against 3.50. This is equivalent to a decline in the exchange premium income of 34 per cent., but a decline in the total gross income of only 11½ per cent. Against this decline must be set a higher price for oil, but whether this will offset the decline in the "premium" income can only be guessed. Even if the dividend is reduced to 10 per cent. for the year, Venezuelan Oil Concessions do not appear dear at 1⅞—to return a yield of £5 8*s*. per cent. The restriction of crude oil output in America, which is at last being enforced, promises a higher level of crude oil prices in 1934, from which producers outside America, not being subject to the N.R.A. increase in production costs, will be the first to benefit. Incidentally we would like to ask the Royal Dutch-Shell group, which controls the Venezuelan Oil Concessions and buys its output, why they give this company dollars instead of pounds? The oil is not sold in America (on account of the tariff) and the proceeds might just as well be calculated in gold florins as in depreciated dollars.

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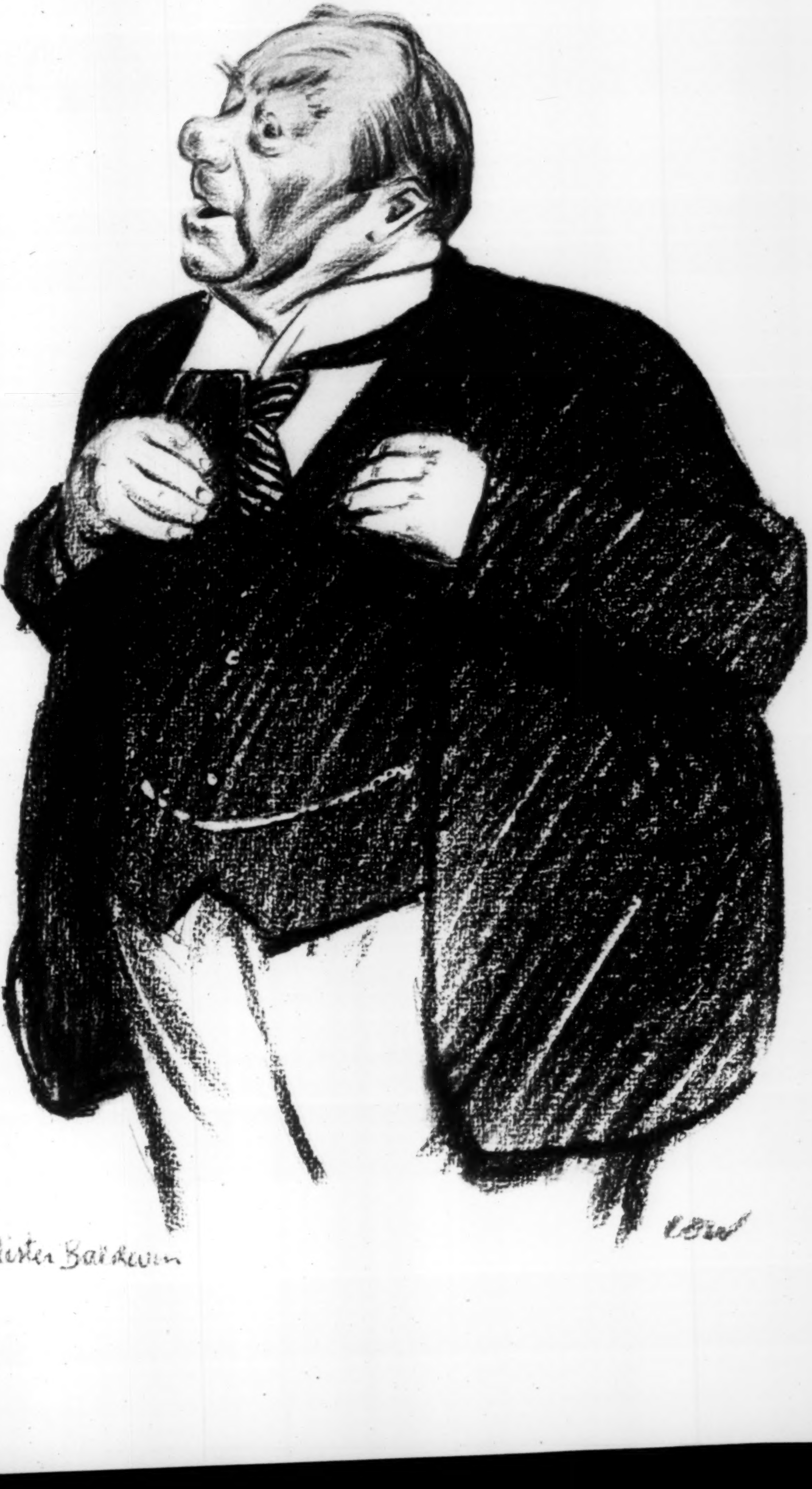

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